Summer 1952

The Costumes of Chaucer'S Pilgrims

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THE COSTUMES OF CHAUCER'S PILGRIMS

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science

by

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Date July 30, 1952 Approved Ralph A. Corder
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I gratefully acknowledge the kind and helpful assistance extended to me during the preparation and writing of this thesis:

To the many fellow students who have helped in various ways.

To Dr. F. E. Streeter, Mrs. Pauline Lindner, Mr. Downing P. O'Harra, and Miss Florence M. Hildebrandt, whose kind and helpful guidance in the collecting of materials has made possible this thesis.

To Dr. Geneva Herndon, Mr. M. F. Coulson, and Mr. Drew A. Dobosh, who have graciously given of their time and counsel.

To Dr. Ralph V. Coder, Head of the English Department, especial thanks are given, whose invaluable assistance and endless patience made the difficult task a work of friendly cooperation and enduring pleasure.

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INTRODUCTION

The collected poems from the pen of Geoffrey Chaucer form a volume of rare and delightful readings, readings which are of a tender and luminous beauty; they are woven with a tremulous ingenuity that frequently repels the superficial reader, tries the endurance of the casual reader, and interests and attracts the earnest reader. Students who enroll in a course in Chaucer will not find it drudgery but will thoroughly enjoy its sparkling beauty and brilliance.

When work was started toward a Master's Degree, a season of study had been completed on Chaucer. There was a desire on the part of the author to combine Chaucer and art. After a conference with Dr. Coder, he granted his permission.

Certain people had attempted to draw pictures of the Canterbury pilgrims, yet nothing authoritative had been done to ascertain these findings. The procedure seemed quite simple, but was indeed difficult; this was to be authentic. Every obtainable clue, giving a thin thread of hope, was completely and thoroughly examined. Bit by bit, the reconstruction of the mosaic of the long forgotten past has been brought to a conclusion.

This thesis was written with the hope of contributing a better understanding, a clearer interpretation, and a greater appreciation

of Chaucer's characters, that these may be to others, as they have been to me, a source of unfeigned delight.

CHAUCER

An old man in a lodge within a park;
The chamber walls depicted all around
With portraitures of huntsman, hawk, and hound,
And the hurt deer. He listeneth to the lark,
Whose song comes with the sunshine through the dark
Of painted glass in leaden lattice bound;
He listeneth and he laugheth at the sound,
Then writeth in a book like any clerk.
He is the poet of the dawn, who wrote
The Canterbury Tales, and his old age
Made beautiful with song; and as I read
I hear the crowing cock, I hear the note
Of lark and linnet, and from every page
Rise odors of ploughed field or flowery mead.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

KNIGHT

But, for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors were goode, but he was not gay.
Of fustian he wered a gypon
Al bismotered with his habergeon,
For he was late ycome from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.[1]

The pilgrims themselves were not less picturesque than the background of their journey. The first character whom Chaucer described in the General Prologue of The Canterbury Tales had an interesting life and note has been given of how old-fashioned was that "verray parfit gentil knyght."[2]

Worthy and dignified, from the first time he had gone to other lands, he loved knighthood, chivalry, truth and honor. With his faithfulness and honorableness, generosity and courtesy, he became an inheritor of a great name and wealth. He did not forget his own rights, yet he had no wish to override those of others, which was a sort of social contract. This meek, well-mounted Knight, "bearing the stains of battle for our faith, sage in council and brave in fight," was "the very prototype of the sturdy, unassuming English gentleman."[3]

The Knight was "so fresh from the holy wars that the grease of his armour still stains his leather doublet, and that we guess

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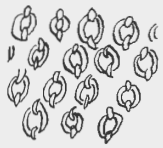
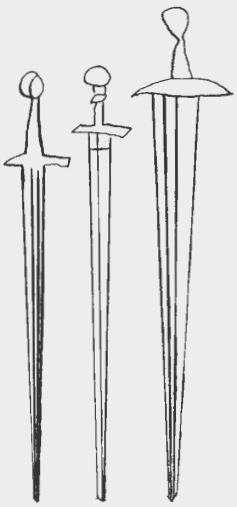
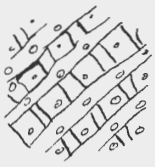
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), pp. 19-20.

[2] Ibid., p. 19.

[3] Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., The Prologue From Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1899), p. lvi.







his rank only from the excellence of his steed and his own high breeding."[4] He was not gaily clad. "He wore a thick cotton coat, which was all stained by his breastplates, for he had just returned from his travels and had set out at once on his pilgrimage."[5] The clothing which he wore were all begrimed by his coat of mail.

> The hauberk, or shirt of mail, reached to the knees; below it, legs and feet were clad in hose of chain-mail. A rather full surcote, to the knee or longer, was crossed by the diagonal sword-belt, and was, probably, additionally belted . . . Over his chain mail hose go jointed plates protecting the front of the legs and feet only. Spurs are fastened on over the steel plates at the ankle. The peculiar form of this man's surcote (some writers call it a "syclas") reveals his other garments very clearly. They are, from inside outward, as follows: cote (dark and plain); hacqueton (scalloped), a tight garment, probably quilted; hauberk (chain-mail); gambeson (scalloped), a tight-fitting sleeveless tunic; and surcote or cyclas, in this case shorter in front than in back. A narrow belt girds his surcote, a sword-belt rests on his hips.[6]

His shoulders and neck were protected by a chain gorget. Efforts were made to render the hauberk more effective and protective by "means of plates of steel on the arms and legs and feet."[7] Even steel gauntlets were made to encase the hands.[8] The head was enclosed in a steel helmet, or helm. "The helm, called a basinet, was

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[4] G. G. Coulton, Chaucer and His England (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950), p. 146.

[5] R. M. Lumiansky, The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), p. 2.

[6] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), p. 137.

[7] Marjorie Quennell and Charles Henry Bourne Quennell, A History of Everyday Things in England 1066-1799 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. 108.

[8] Loc. cit.

a round metal head covering, usually fastened to the chain mail hood or gorget."[9] The basinet was worn over the hood of mail.

> Next, the camail of chain mail eliminated the hood. It was a cape-like affair sliding upon a rod or string, very much like a curtain attached to the basinet. The camail protected the lower part of the face and the neck. A movable visor succeeded the primitive nose guard and the basinet with camail and visor became the battle headdress of the fourteenth century for nobles, knights and sergeants. . . The basinet, really a basin as its name implies, was a lighter helmet of a single piece of steel, the conical point being its distinguishing feature . . . the knight found the basinet insufficient protection and wore over it or his hood of mail, when he went into the melee, a heavy iron pot covering head and neck. The heaume (helm) usually rested upon the shoulders, permitting freedom of movement inside, had slits for eyes and perforations for air but even so, must have been frightfully uncomfortable. Knights often collapsed from heat and the weight.[10]

The hinged movable visor or camail could be worn back from the face. The hauberk of solid plate was fitted to the body, hinged at the sides, and buckled together. Sollerets covered the feet.

> One noticeable feature in the armour of this century was the advent of chain mail . . . The chain mail was made of rings of steel interwoven one with the other, without any groundwork of velvet or linen. It was, of course, much lighter and more flexible than banded mail, but was nearly always worn over a gambeson. The gambeson was a quilted garment, a kind of thick tunic well padded with wool, and it was worn solely as an extra protection under the armour, the woollen padding making it very impervious to thrusts or arrows. Chain mail is generally supposed to have been brought to England by the Crusaders from the East, where it had been in use for a very long time.[11]

Shields, being retained for bowmen, were omitted from knightly

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[9] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 114.

[10] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 66.

[11] Quennell, op. cit., p. 109.

equipment. The dagger was ordinarily worn on the belt, however, some dandies hung it around the neck and at the back even, where it seemed more ornamental than useful.

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Glossary

Amorial bearings - each knight assumed whatever motif he fancied for himself, displaying it upon his shield, banners and pennants and the costumes of his followers.

Basinet - steel helmet.

Buckler - a kind of shield worn on the arm.

Chain mail - rings of steel interwoven one with the other.

Crossbow - arbalest; a medieval weapon formed of a bow set crosswise on a stock.

Cyclas - outer coat or cloak.

Doublet - short tunic originally made of double material with padding inside; it was tight fitting.

Fustian - a thick, cotton cloth; a cotton or woolen cloth.

Gambeson - quilted garment.

Gauntlet - a glove to defend the hand from wounds.

Gorget - chain mail hood.

Gypon (gypoun) - tunic, (worn under the hauberk).

Habergeoun (haubergeoun) - hauberk, coat of mail.

Haketon - jacket without sleeves.

Hauberk - armor for breast and back, mail plates; shirt of mail, reached to the knees.

Helm - steel helmet.

Mail armor - metal rings sewn separately to a foundation garment of leather or heavy linen.

Sollerets - pieces of plate covering the feet.

Surcoat - outer coat or cloak.

Visor - front piece of a helmet, especially, an upper piece, arranged so as to lift or open.

SQUIRE

With hym ther was his sone, a yong Squier,
A lovyere and a lusty bacheler,
With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe
And wonderly delyvere, and of greet strengthe.
. . . . . .
Embrouded was he, as it were a meede
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and reede.
Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day;
He was as fressh as is the month of May.
Short was his gowne, with sleves longe and wyde.
Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde.
He koude songes make and wel endite,
Juste and eek daunce, and weel purtreye and write.
So hoote he lovede that by nyghtertale
He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.[1]

The Squire was the model of youthful beauty and strength. He was just what a proper young man of the upper classes should be, physically well endowed, wonderfully nimble, and remarkably strong. Although very young, he could ride well; he participated in cavalry raids and military expeditions, and gave many hard blows to France.

This cury-haired Squire was a ladies' man. He was a dandy, a man who had given excessive attention to his dress, yet one who had given and taken hard knocks in the Low Countries. Being very courteous, modest, humble, and helpful, an effort was put forth to win his lady's favor or to hope to stand in her grace. His charm is nature's giving. Definitely a lover and a lusty bachelor, he was as joyful and fresh as

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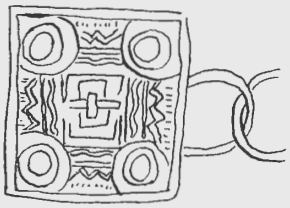
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 20.



the month of May, and any young animal has grace. What he could do represented "in some degree at least the accomplishments which were cultivated by the most sophisticated young men of the time."[2] Bubbling over with gayety and energy, this young blade loved so ardently that he had the same difficulty as the nightingales, being sleepless during the fresh warm nights of spring. Sap was running, not only in the trees and bushes, but also in this pilgrim.

The Squire had yellow hair as curly as if it had been set. Saffron was used to dye the hair,[3] the desired color being blonde.[4]

> According to the miniatures of the period the hair was often crimped, giving the effect of having been tightly plaited and then undone. It is possible, however, that this was the contemporary interpretation of curly hair, and that all the young squire did was to plait his locks tightly overnight. Chaucer's Squyer, . . . rather gives us this impression.[5]

His yellow curls fell upon the shortest of fashionable gowns, being worn "shockingly"[6] short. "His cotehardie or courtepy, with wide sleeves, is embellished with embroidery 'like a meadow' (which suggests that it is made of a green cloth or silk) 'full of white

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[2] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light on Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), p. 279.

[3] Elizabeth Sage, A Study of Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 74.

[4] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 39.

[5] Iris Brooke, English Costume of the Later Middle Ages (London: A. & C. Black, Ltd., 1935), p. 38.

[6] Wilcox, op. cit., p. 38.

and red flowers.'"[7] His tunic "either hung straight or was belted,"[8] with a skirt of only a few inches below the waist. The lining of his cotehardie is of silk in contrasting color. A roll of white fur finishes the high collar and border of his cotehardie. These long, wide sleeves were "dagged"[9] at the edges; the band was embroidered with gold. "These long bell-shaped sleeves emphasized, by contrast, the slimness of waist and hips."[10]

He wore a carcanet, a curious high cap, and rich hose. Enameled or jewelled plaques were inserted at regular intervals in the chain, which was called either a necklace or carcanet.[11] "The slender waist is encircled by a gold belt whence hang small gold bells on chains."[12] The small silver bells were a fashionable trimming.

"Hip-length stockings or tights were worn, made of bias material, usually red with gold and jewelled garters, accompanied by soft leather

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[7] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, p. 251.

[8] Wilcox, op. cit., p. 38.

[9] Mary G. Houston, Medieval Costume in England and France (4, 5 & 6 Soho Square London W.: Adam & Charles Black, 1939), p. 118.

[10] Loc. cit.

[11] Katherine Morris Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, Accessories of Dress (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1940), p. 184.

[12] Norris, loc. cit.

shoes."[13] Points connected the long hose to the doublet "which were ties or laces with a metal tag at the end."[14]

> Frequently dandies had the toes held up by fine chains attached to garters at the knees and during the period when tiny silver bells, folly bells the English called them, decorated the costume, a tinkling bell adorned the upturned toe.[15]

> . . . the Monk of Evesham speaks of the deep wide sleeves, commonly called pokys, shaped like a bagpipe, and worn indifferently by servants as well as masters. They were denominated, he says, the devil's receptacles, for whatever could be stolen was popped into them. Some were so long and so wide that they reached to the feet, others to the knees, and were full of slits. As the servants were bringing up pottage, sauces, etc., their sleeves 'would go into them, and have first taste;' and all that they could procure was meant to clothe their uncurable carcasses with those pokys or sleeves, while the rest of their habit was short.[16]

-o-

Glossary

Carcarnet - necklace.

Cotehardie - external garment.

Courtepy - upper short coat.

Saffron - the dried orange-colored stigmas of a species of crocus.

Tunic - outer coat.

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[13] Wilcox, op. cit., p. 38.

[14] Katherine Morris Lester, Historic Costume (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, (c1925), p. 99.

[15] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Footwear (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 67.

[16] James Robinson Planche, History of British Costume (London: George Bell and Sons, York Street, Convent Garden, 1874), p. 168.

YEOMAN

A Yeman hadde he and servantz namo
At that tyme, for hym liste ride so;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.
A sheef of pecok arwes, bright and kene,
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily,
(Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly:
His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe)
And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.
A not heed hadde he, with a brown visage.
Of wodecraft wel koude he al the usage.
Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer,
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
And on that oother syde a gay daggere
Harneised wel and sharp as point of spere;
A Christopher on his brest of silver sheene.
An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene;
A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.[1]

This stupid, faithful, nut-headed Yeoman carefully carried his bow and beautifully kept tackle, which shows that he was a woodsman. "He knew how to handle his gear like a good yeoman; his arrows flew not aslant with feathers trailing."[2] He knew very well how to care for his equipment.[3] He understood all the tricks of woodcraft.

This Forester was clad in coat and hood of "the proverbial Kendal green."[4] "Kendal was a coarse woolen cloth much used by

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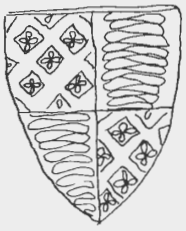
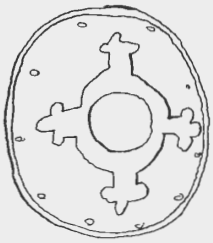
[1] E. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 20.

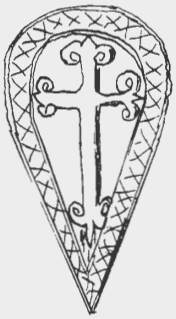
[2] John S. P. Tatlock and Perch Mackaye, The Complete Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), pp. 2-3.

[3] R. M. Lumiansky, The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), p. 2.

[4] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, p. 260.







huntsmen, foresters, and country squires."[5] His complexion was brown, and his head was cropped so that one critic called him, "A nut-head . . . from the hair probably being cut short."[6]

> The baudric from which hung the horn was also green, and he wore upon his breast a 'christopher' of polished silver -- a clasp or pendant with the image of St. Christopher carrying Our Lord upon his shoulders engraved on it, a very favourite subject at this time. A 'might bow' was carried, besides a sword, a 'handsome dagger,' and a small shield or buckler, and beneath his girdle appeared a 'bundle of sharp bright arrows plumed with peacocks' feathers.' To protect the hand and arm when using the bow, a guard was worn in the shape of a glove with a long ornamented leather top, called a 'Bracer that was rich and broad.'[7]

He carried the strong bow in his hands, and the sheaf of bright, keen peacock arrows was attached to his belt or tucked beneath his girdle. His sword and small shield was carried on his one side, while the fine, ornamental dagger, well accoutred and as sharp as the point of a spear, was carried on the other side.

The King's deer would certainly thank the Knight for taking this fellow out of the greenwood forest.

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[5] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 109.

[6] Thomas Tyrwhitt, The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer (London: Cassell Petter & Galpin, 1798), I, p. 183.

[7] Norris, loc. cit.

Glossary

Baudric - a belt worn over one shoulder, across the breast, and under the opposite arm to support the sword, bugle, etc.; a belt or girdle similarly worn about the waist.

Bow - a weapon made of elastic material, as a strip of wood, with a cord to connect the two ends when bent, by which an arrow is propelled.

Buckler - a kind of shield worn on the arm.

Christopher - clasp or pendant with the image of St. Christopher carrying our Lord upon his shoulders engraved on it.

Dagger - a short weapon for stabbing.

Kendal - coarse woolen cloth.

Shield - A broad piece of defensive armor carried on the arm or by the hand.

Sword - a weapon having a long and usually pointed blade with a cutting edge or edges.

NUN (PRIORESS)

Ther was also a Nonne, a Prioresse,
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;
Hire gretteste ooth was but by Seinte Loy;
And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.
. . . . . .
And al was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was;
Hir nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,
Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;
It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war.
Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,
And thereon heng a brooch of gold full sheene,
On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after Amor vincit amnia.[1]

Madame Eglentyne was "one of the most carefully drawn portraits in the gallery of pilgrims."[2] She was a dignified figure, an individual, and it was obvious that she commanded respect from the whole company. She had all the airs and graces of a lady. The influences and atmosphere of the nunnery made for gentle breeding. She took pains to be dignified, stately in her demeanor, imitating court manners, and to be considered worthy of respect and reverence. "The large majority of nuns were of the upper or upper middle class, . . . and, in the cloister, promotion naturally went very often by

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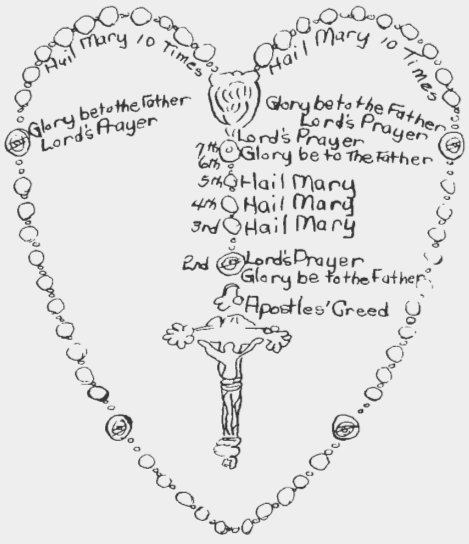
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), pp. 20-21.

[2] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light on Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), p. 202.


VINCIT
QUI PATIENTIA


Hail Mary 10 Times
Glory be to the Father
Lord's Prayer
Hail Mary 10 Times
Glory be to the Father
Lord's Prayer
7th
6th
Glory be to the Father
5th Hail Mary
4th Hail Mary
3rd Hail Mary
2nd Lord's Prayer
Glory be to the Father
Apostles' Creed

good birth and good connections; it may well have been that Madam Eglantyne was of nobler lineage than the Knight himself."[3] Perhaps she was quite distressed to be in such a mixed company with her dignified reserve, yet she was sincerely courteous to all of her companions. Believing that she rides by preference near the respectable Knight, she certainly looks sideways to the ribald Friar who rides close behind her.

This nun's smile was very quiet and simple. Her pleasure was all in courtesy. She was all warm feeling and tender-hearted, indeed, every thing with her was tenderness and soft-heartedness. She had some small dogs, which she fed roasted meat, milk, and the finest of wheat bread. If someone would strike them with a stick or one would die, she cried bitterly.

In her elegance, her table manners could not be improved upon. She was entertaining and amusing, and her friendliness and kind-heartedness caused her to be liked by all. In fact, she was a charming person. Even her harshest curse, "By Saint Loy," is mild indeed and indicative of her extreme delicacy. "She swore by the most elegant and courtly saint in the calendar, one thoroughly representative of the feminine tastes which she preserved in spite of her devotion to religion."[4]

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[3] G. G. Coulton, Medieval Panorama (Cambridge: University Press, 1939), p. 276.

[4] Manly, op. cit., p. 213.

> After chivalry comes the Church; and first the fine black cloth and snowy linen of Madam Eglantine and her fellow nun, clean and dainty and demure, like a pair of aristocratic pussy-cats on a drawing room hearthrug.[5]

She was as dainty as the daintiest worldling and a caged creature is charming even to worldlings, yet with all the added charm of pure religion. This demure Prioress was in the cleanest of black and white garments, which were well made. Her wimple was pinched, or neatly pleated, and it was officially supposed to be puritanically plain, letting it hide as much of the face as possible, coming down to the very eyebrows. Her fair forehead was almost a span high, and a hand's breadth wide. "'But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;' there comes the crowing glory of her features, and it lifts us to a higher plane; she has charmed us as a woman, and now she impresses us with her intellect."[6] The forehead was one of the great points of medieval comeliness, and the wimple was certainly a distressing feature. "A wimple so pleated as to earn Chaucer's commendation was technically as irregular as a guardsman's moustache would be on the quarter-deck of a man-of-war."[7] She had blue eyes, a shapely nose, a very small, soft, red mouth; in truth, she was attractive.

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[5] G. G. Coulton, Chaucer and His England (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950), p. 147.

[6] G. G. Coulton, Medieval Panorama (Cambridge: University Press, 1939), p. 276.

[7] Loc. cit.

Madame Eglentyne had her share of personal adornment. "It is well known that the 'pair of beads' which the Prioress wore upon her arm was what is now called a rosary."[8] In the time of Chaucer, the paternoster consisted usually of either ten or twelve beads. Every eleventh bead stood for a paternoster and was called a gaudy. The paternoster is the Lord's Prayer, especially in its Latin form; it is so called from its opening words, the Latin equivalent of "Our Father." She wore the coral rosary gauded with green, or with the large green beads for the paternosters, on her arm. A shining gold brooch was attached to and hung from the rosary. "And on this brooch was first inscribed a capital A, surmounted by a crown, and after that Amor vincit omnia,"[9] which being interpreted, "Love overcometh all things."

-o-

Glossary

Paternoster - the Lord's Prayer, especially in its Latin form; so called from its opening words, the Latin equivalent of "Our Father." A bead on a rosary, indicating that a paternoster is to be said; also, a rosary.

Rosary - a series of prayers to be recited in order; also, a string of beads for counting prayers.

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[8] Manly, op. cit., p. 218.

[9] G. G. Coulton, Medieval Panorama (Cambridge: University Press, 1939), p. 277.

Wimple - a cloth formerly worn by women about the head and neck.

SECOND NUN

Another Nonne with hire hadde she,
That was hir chapeleyne, and preestes thre.[1]

Very little has been said about the Second Nun. She was a chapeleyne, a sort of private secretary and general, or personal assistant to the Prioress.

Nun's robes were regulated with few changes. In the Religious Orders women's dress is on similar lines to that of the men, the chief difference being that woman has a headveil and gorget or wimple, while the man has a hood.

A Dominican nun's "head-veil is black, with a white veil lining it, the wimple, gown and scapular are white," while in the Third Order of Servites, a sister's "veil and wimple are white and all the remainder of her habit is black."[2]

Nuns affected the loose dalmatic with wide sleeves.
. . . . . .
Wimples, in their earliest form, went out of fashion in 1360, except for widows, nuns, and middle-class women -- but variations were used for centuries afterwards. For travel, a flat-brimmed, low, round-crowned hat (similar to the Greek petasos), tied under the chin with cords, was used.[3]

Until the 'seventies, the barbette might be attached to the plaits at the side of the face or draped right around the face.

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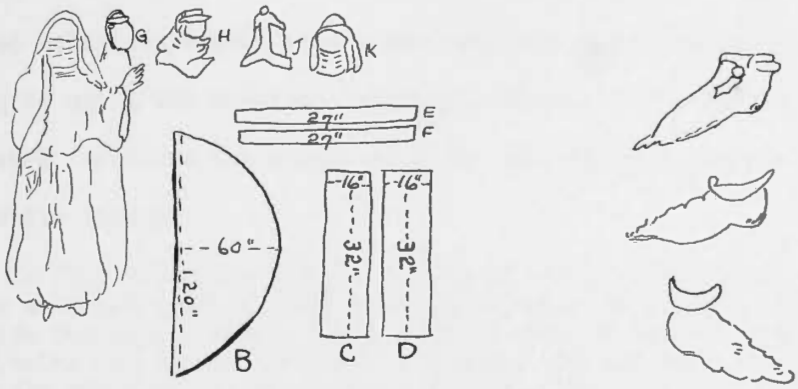
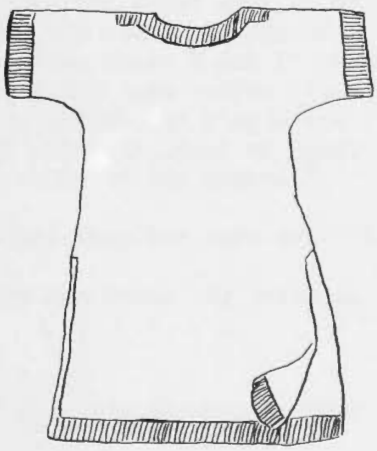
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 21.

[2] Mary G. Houston, Medieval Costume in England and France (4, 5, & 6 Soho Square London W.: Adam & Charles Black, 1939), p. 39.

[3] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), pp. 116, 118.



(Fig. 117. Dressing the Part, Walkup.)



Later, "the barbette was replaced by the chincloth or gorget, a piece of linen or silk draped over chin, neck and shoulders and pinned to the hair at the sides of the face."[4] The headdress for widows and women of religious orders became the combined wimple and gorget, remaining so until the twentieth century. "Women of the Church, however, were forbidden the wimple of silk, wearing then, as now, one of plain white linen."[5]

> In fig. 117CD are the two pieces of white cloth (linen was the material used by nuns) used for wimple and gorget. Though these rectangles drape nicely, better results may be obtained by using two squares, in which instance the designer must double the width given (instead of 32" x 16", use 32" x 32"). Strips E and F (each about one inch wide) are fastened, E about the forehead, F about the chin, care being taken to follow the tip of the chin fig. 117G. Pin securely; also pin at temples where the two strips cross. Next adjust the gorget, C. Fold the square C on the bias, center bias edge at chin, follow line of chin strap F, and lay over top fig. 117HJ. Next lay the wimple (square D) over the head, centering front edge at middle of forehead, pinning to band E. Pin the straight edge of D carefully to the temples at either side, where E and F cross. The veil will then fall in graceful folds down either side of the face, fig. 117K. Over the white gorget and wimple was often worn a second, longer veil of white or black or blue; the color designated the religious order of the wearer.[6]

A cyclas sometimes was worn to help keep her warm and comfortable. "Short hose, cross-gartered, were the usual leg covering."[7]

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[4] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode of Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 44.

[5] Loc. cit.

[6] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), pp. 117-118.

[7] Ibid., p. 119.

The fashions of men's shoes were followed by the women's shoes, although they did not have the extremely pointed toes, due, probably to the very long skirts which hid the feet.

-o-

Glossary

Barbette - band under the chin.

Chincloth - (or gorget) a piece of linen or silk draped over chin, neck and shoulders and pinned to the hair at the sides of the face.

Dalmatic - this vestment takes its name from Dalmatia; it is shorter than the alb and has shorter, wider sleeves, also it is slit at the sides from the bottom upwards for some distance.

Gorget - see chincloth.

Scapular - loose fitting white garment worn all the time; a large white strip of goods fitting both front and back.

Wimple - a veil covering neck and chin.

THREE PRIESTS

. . . . . and preestes thre.[1]

Shadowy figures are presented here. At this time the power of the Church seems to have been quite negligible regarding modesty in clothes. "It is particularly interesting to note this when it is realized that priests and nuns all wore the same attire as their brothers and sisters who had not taken holy orders.[2] During this time priests wore about the same vestments they had worn during the Middle Ages. Still flowing and graceful, the chasuble, although narrowed a little at the sides, was worn with a point back and front.

> Monastic robes, and also nuns' robes, were thoroughly regulated, with few changes. . . . . Pilgrims who 'went to the shrine of St Thomas a Becket at Canterbury, could wear the Canterbury bells, or carry an ampulla with some of the holy saint's blood (much diluted) in it.[3]

The priest's order of clothing vested for Mass includes,

1. The Amice with its apparel.
2. The Orphrey or decoration of his Chasuble.
3. The Chasuble.
4. The Sleeves of his Alb.
5. Apparels at wrists of Alb.
6. The Maniple.

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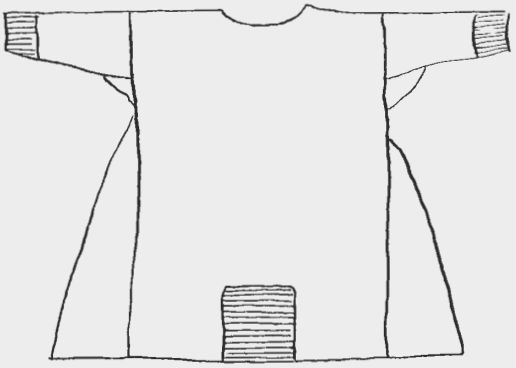
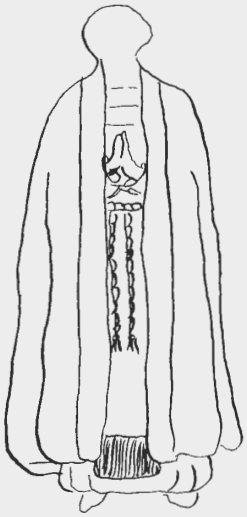
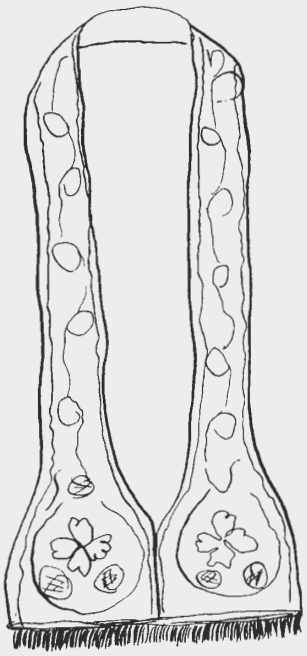
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 21.

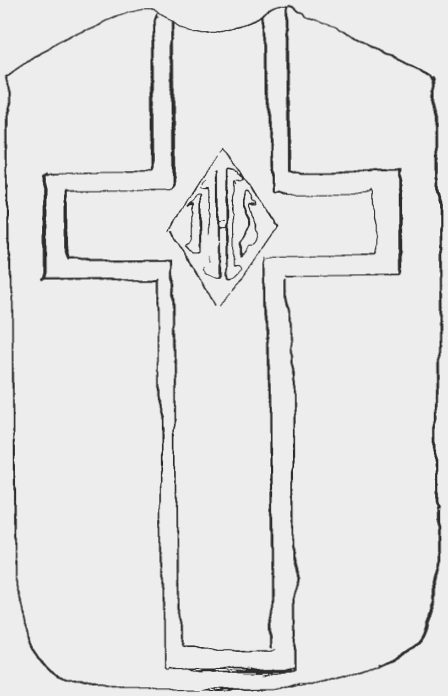
[2] Iris Brooke, English Costume From the Fourteenth Through the Nineteenth Century (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 24.

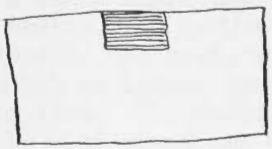
[3] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 114.

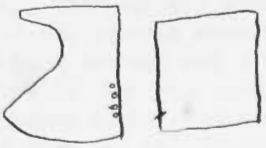


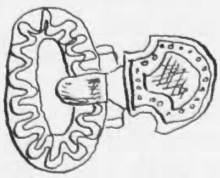












7. Ends of the Stole which he wears crossed in front and fastened by girdle.
8. The Alb.
9. The Apparel in front of Alb.

The Amice is a white linen napkin or veil worn by all clergy above the minor orders. It is the first of the sacred vestments to be put on, first on the head, then adjusted around the neck. It has strings about 74 inches long attached to the two corners of the apparalled side. The strings are passed under the arms from the front, brought round the back and tied on the breast. The Eucharistic amice must be distinguished from the almuce or grey amice worn as a monastic or academical garment, . . . The apparel was sewn on to the top edge of the amice and formed the collar which is invariably represented on the effigies of ecclesiastics. The linen part of the amice protects the rich silk of the chasuble or dalmatic from touching the skin. Its measurements varied. . . . The original form of this chasuble was perfectly round with a hole in the centre for the head to pass through. It was large enough to cover the whole body and its name is said to be derived from the Latin word casula -- a little house. . . . During the centuries the chasuble became shorter at the sides and hung down in front and behind in long points but it was frequently soft and voluminous in its folds. Eventually it was clipped, altered, and at the same time stiffened, so that we get what has been called the 'fiddle-back shape.'[4]

The fine white linen alb closely resembles the long tunic. The "most ancient kind of apparels take the form of borders at hem and wrists."[5]

The maniple was one of the sacred vestments assumed while serving at the altar.

It was originally a narrow band of linen used as a handkerchief, for wiping the forehead, face, etc., but during the Middle Ages it had become a stiff, richly-decorated band with fringed ends and was merely ornamental. It was at first, held

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[4] Mary G. Houston, Medieval Costume in England and France (4, 5 & 6 Soho Square London W.: Adam & Charles Black, 1939), pp. 20, 23-34.

[5] Ibid., p. 23.

in the left hand but afterwards looped over the left wrist. Pugin gives its length as 3 feet 4 inches.[6]

The stole was crossed over at the waist under the girdle for priests. According to Pugin, it was about three yards long.

Ecclesiastics of different ranks were distinguished "by the number of tassels on the hat strings: one to each string for a priest, three for a bishop, seven for a cardinal."[7]

In contrast to the usually moderately short masculine haircut, "some men wore their hair cropped short like a priest's and the back of the neck shaved."[8]

Soft pliable, clinging, moccasin type, extending to the ankles, easily adjusted, strap, lace or ribbon fastenings, marked the characteristic shoe. Side v-shaped cut out places afforded greater ease in slipping them on and off. Instep buckles were used, that is, shoes buckled at the instep. Ornamental buckles fastened garters which were a fashionable accessory of the time.

In Piers Ploughman's Crede, a fourteenth- entury poem, the Franciscan brothers, who had been accustomed to go barefoot

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[6] Ibid., p. 28.

[7] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), pp. 137-138.

[8] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 58.

are hotly denounced.[9] 'Now,' says the indignant critic, 'they have buckled shoes!'

In the same poem, the author was "carping at the clergy,"[10] during the latter half of the fourteenth-century, and said it would be better

> If many a priest bare for their baselards and their brooches,
> a pair of beads in their hand, and a book under their arm.
> Sire John and Sire Geffrey hath a girdle of silver,
> A baselard and a knife, with botons overgilt.[11]

-o-

Glossary

Alb - resembles the long tunic.

Almuce - a large cape, often with hood attached, of cloth turned down over the shoulders and lined with fur.

Amice - a white linen napkin or veil.

Chasuble - original form of this vestment was perfectly round with a hole in the centre for the head to pass through.

Cucullus - hood.

Maniple - originally a narrow band of linen used as a handkerchief; later, a stiff, richly-decorated band with fringed edges, merely ornamental.

Tunicle - distinguished from the dalmatic by being slightly shorter and not so ample.

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[9] Katherine Morris Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, Accessories of Dress (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1940), p. 281.

[10] Edward L. Cutts, Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages (London: Simpkin Marshall, Ltd. Stationers' Hall Court, E. C. 4, 1930), p. 247.

[11] Loc. cit.

MONK

A Monk ther was, a fair for the maistrie,
An outridere, that lovede venerie,
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable,
And whan he rood, men myghte his brydel heere
Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd als cleere
And eek as loude as doth the chapel belle.
. . . . . .
Therefore he was a prikasour aright:
Grehoundes he hadde as swift as fowel in flight;
Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
I seigh his sleves purfiled at the hond
With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;
And, for to festne his hood under his chyn,
He hadde of gold ywroght a ful curious pyn;
A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face, as he hadde been enoynt.
He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;
His eyen stepe, and rollynge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed;
His bootes souple, his hors in greet estaat.
Now certeinly he was a fair prelaat;
He was nat pale as a forpyned goost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as brown as is a berye.[1]

This exceedingly fine and imposing Monk. "whose name is Sir Peers,"[2] has no scorn of his poor unworldly brothers in their humility. He indicated clearly that he was not in favor of church regulations.

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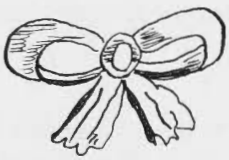
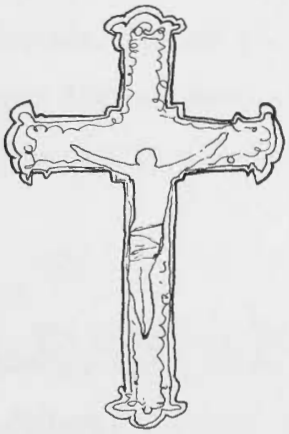
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 21.

[2] NormanG. Brett-James, Introducing Chaucer (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 111.





> He preferred hunting, horses, and greyhounds, fur-lined sleeves, gold pins, and love-knots to chapel services, study and strict rules of the cloister. He was fat and flourishing, well-mannered, a man of the world, and well suited to be made an abbot, with his taste for roast swan.[3]

His outstanding job "was to supervise the monastery's estate."[4] He followed new-fangled ideas in things spiritual as well as in clothing. The simple reason? He disliked the old stringent rules of St. Maurus or St. Benedict. After all, why not? He dressed in open defiance of the regulations of the church. His tunic sleeves were edged at the wrist with fine, dark fur de gris, the finest in the land.

> Gris was the fur of the grey squirrel, finest and most expensive of all except ermine and vair. It was expressly forbidden to monks, as also was burnet (fine black cloth of the quality that we now call broadcloth) as a luxury which belied their profession. Yet, in Chaucer's day, it was already common -- the papal registers prove it -- for individual cloisterers to buy from Rome private indulgences for this forbidden gris; bribing, as the boldest and most successful always do in every age and place, at the very fountainhead.[5]

Soft fur was comfortable to the wrists. For one thing the Monk has sensibility; he surrounded himself with pleasant sensations and agreeable living conditions. He had a very rare gold pin, curiously wrought, and fashioned like a true-lover's knot, to fasten his hood under his chin. "But a monk that is bounden to poverty by his

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[3] Ibid., p. 65.

[4] R. M. Lumiansky, The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), p. 3.

[5] G. G. Coulton, Medieval Panorama (Cambridge: University Press, 1939), p. 274.

profession will have an ouche (locket) or a broche of gold and silver, in value of a noble or much more."[6] "The capuchin or hood, separate or attached to a mantle, was much in evidence, and persisted as the common head covering of monks through the centuries."[7]

Shining like glass, his bald head matched his shining face, which looked as if it had been oiled. His protruding and gleaming eyes rolled and glowed like live coals under a kettle.

His foppish love of display is shown in his supple boots which were of rich soft leather. "The ankle shoe and half boot were frequently of colored leather ornamented with gold."[8] Buskins, or short laced boots, were used, especially by soldiers, travelers, and the lower classes.

> The cowl is a cumbersome garment enveloping the whole body, but it is worn only at ceremonies. Ordinarily the monks wear black scapularies, covering head and body completely. They also have short mantle-style capes. New outer garments are issued to them every year, new day shoes every eighteen months, new boots once in five years, and a new pair of woolen shirts once in four years. They are also granted both a thin and a thick tunic, a fur-lined coat for cold weather, also undershirt and drawers - in short, no silly luxuries, but no absurd austerities.[9]

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[6] Ibid., p. 273

[7] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 112.

[8] Katherine Morris Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, Accessories of Dress (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1940), p. 258.

[9] William Stearns Davis, Life on a Mediaeval Barony (New York: Harpers & Brothers, 1923), pp. 320-321.

Glossary

Burnet - fine black broadcloth.

Buskins - short, laced boots.

Capuchin - hood.

Cowl - monk's cloak with a hood.

Gris - grey squirrel fur.

Scapularies - originally, a working garment worn by monks, now the sleeveless outer part of the monastic habit carrying the cowl, put on over the head and falling down from the shoulders in front and back.

FRIAR

His typet was ay farsed ful of knyves
And pynnes, for to yeven faire wyves.
. . . . . .
His nekke whit was as the flour-de-lys;
Therto he strong was as a champioun.
. . . . . .
For ther he was nat lyk a cloysterer
With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scoler,
But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
Of double worstede was his semycope,
That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
Somwhat he lipsed, for his wantownesse,
To make his Englissh sweete upon his tonge;
And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde songe,
His eyen twynkled in his heed aryght,
As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.
This worthy lymytour was cleped Huberd.[1]

A stumbling block in the way of true religion and morality, this begging Friar, wanton and jolly, was a very self-important fellow, skilled in flattering talk. Being a papal licensed beggar and a very gay, even courteous, lowly and serviceable man, "though a widow might not have an old shoe to give, so pleasant was his 'in principio,' he would have his farthing ere he went."[2] Talk about gossip. He must have been the founder, with the fair sex following him ever after. He stuffed the fair dames with garbage, and they liked it.

Flaming indignation was aroused when the whole principle of

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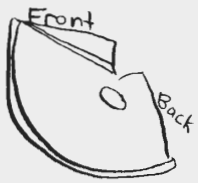
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), pp. 21-22.

[2] John S. P. Tatlock and Percy Mackaye, The Complete Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), p. 5.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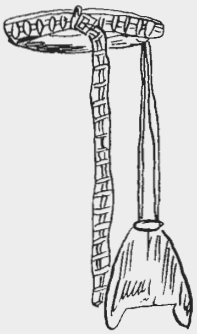

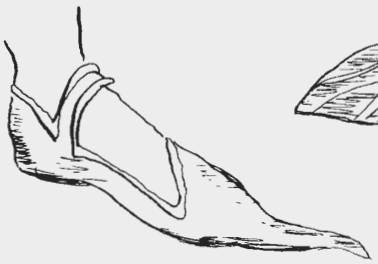

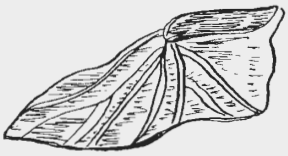

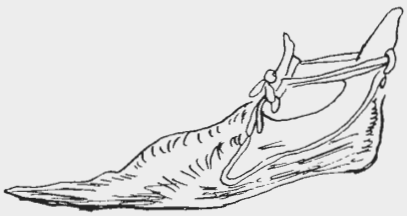

strict claustration was abandoned by the hated, yet ingratiated, Friar. His double worsted half cope came from the clothes press rounded out like a bell.

During the 'eighties, the houppelande, a bell-shaped garment, or a gown made into a bell shape, was fashioned from a complete circle of material with a hole for the neck in the centre of the circle. No folds, by the nature of its shaping, appeared on the shoulders. The first fullness was girdled at the waist, then fell in increasing fullness to the thighs or ankles, being cut in varying lengths to suit the wearer. It was adopted and worn by both men and women. An outstanding feature was the gracefulness of the heavy folds.

> The throat was high, the collar often covering the ears, and it fastened down the front some six or seven inches. Very often the opening at the throat was edged with fur, or the edge of the collar itself might be dagged.[3]

The houppelande had long, loose-hanging sleeves. For cold, rainy outdoor wear, a circular cape with a hood, or a great oblong piece of material, was used. "The men wore the tippet, made of silk and fastened on the lower part of the sleeve like a detachable cuff."[4] A band could be worn above the elbow of the sleeve, "from which depended a tippet, or narrow piece of cloth, originally white."[5] They

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[3] Iris Brooke, Western European Costume Thirteenth to Seventeenth Century and Its Relation to the Theatre (London: George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., 1939), pp. 60-62

[4] Elizabeth Sage, A Study of Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 75.

[5] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 109.

became quite elaborate, with scalloped edges. "Sometimes the tippet was simply a cord with tassels or bells at intervals as trimming."[6] They varied in length from a few inches to several feet. He always stuffed his tippet full of knives and pins which were to be given to pretty women.

> Langland 'speaks of the friars wearing spotless linen underneath their outer garments, which were so dirty that corn might be grown in them. The cotton cope which covered them was only an outward sign of endurance, for beneath this they were well-padded with short fur or beaver coats, and socks were surreptitiously worn inside the shoes to keep their feet from chilblains. . . . the clergy asking for alms in the street were often the proud possessors of six or seven copes, and could afford the luxury of red shoes.[7]

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Glossary

Houppelande - a bell shaped garment.

Tippet - narrow piece of cloth.

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[6] Ibid., p. 110.

[7] Iris Brooke, English Costume From the Fourteenth Through the Nineteenth Century (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 26.

MERCHANT

A Marchant was ther with a forked berd,
In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat;
Upon his heed a Glaundryssh bever hat,
His bootes clasped faire and fetisly.
His resons he spak ful solempnely,
Sownynge alwey th' encrees of his wynnyng.
He wolde the see were kept for any thyng
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette:
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
So estatly was he of his governaunce
With his bargaynes and with his chevyssaunce.
For sothe he was a worthy man with alle,
But, sooth to seyn, I noot how men hym calle.[1]

Like so many -- in fact, all-- of the occupational designations in the Prologue, 'merchant' was in the 14th century very specific in its meaning and was not applicable, as it is today, to any shopkeeper, great or small. Merchants were men engaged in the wholesale trade as importers or exporters or both. Their main traffic was in wool, woolfells, hides, cloth, tin, and iron.[2]

He uttered his opinions very pompously, always bragging about his increased profits. Foreign life gave him special facilities for getting and selling crown pieces, "sheeldes" (ecus), which he sold in exchange at illegal rates of profit, yet he was so closemouthed about all of his dealings that no one knew he was ever in debt. He was gracious enough, but he makes sure of his winnings. Business is business when it comes to the exchange.

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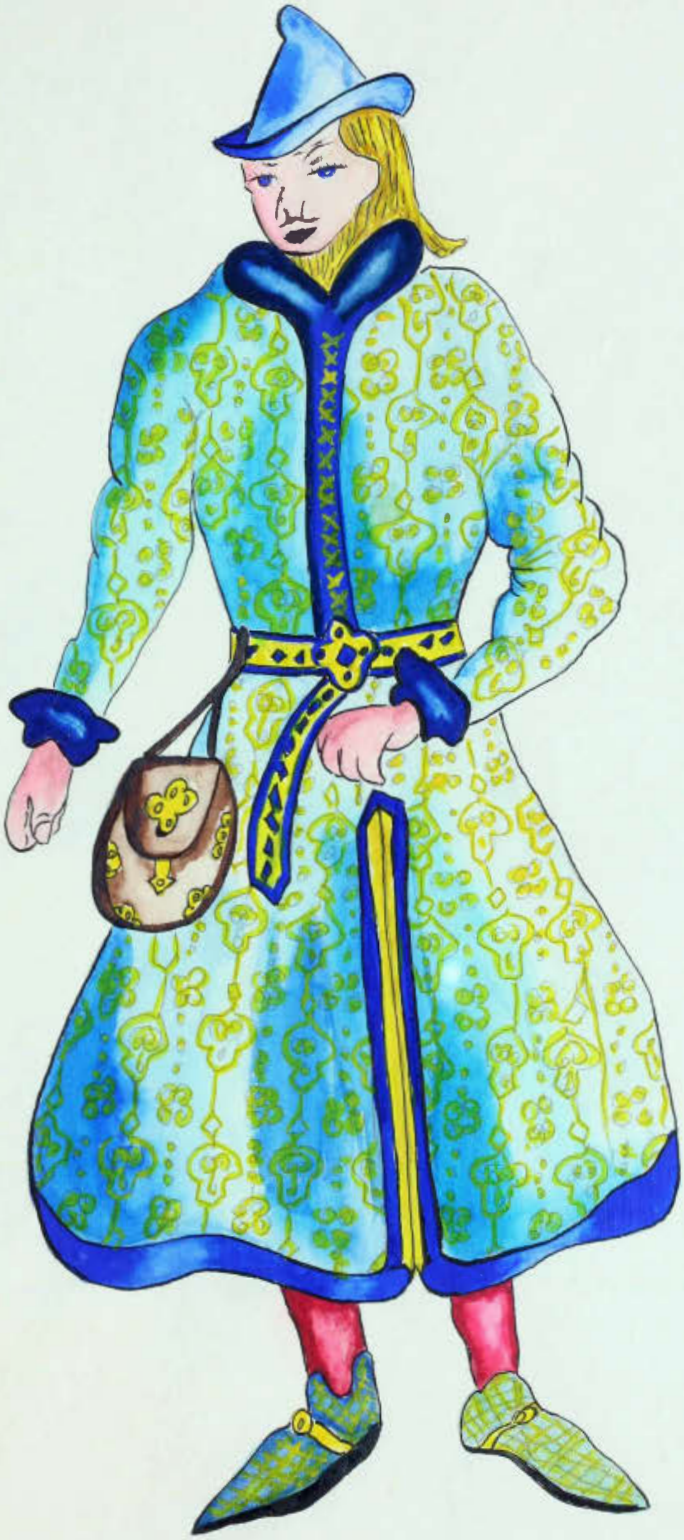
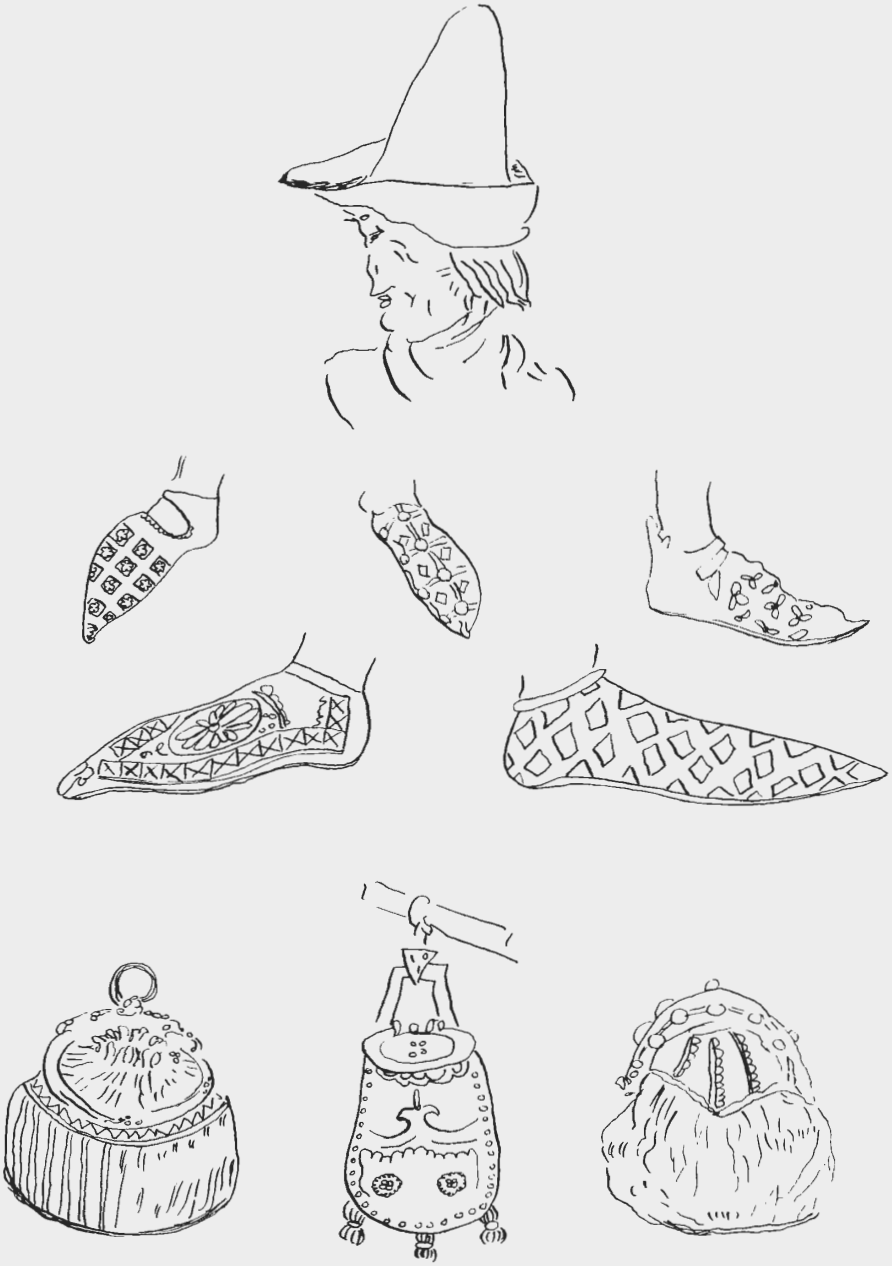
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 22.

[2] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light on Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), p. 182.





He was soberly clad, no show, just suitable clothing. His "motley-coloured (spotted, or it might be parti-coloured or rayed) tunic leaced down the front and sides, an unusual manner, the tunic forming an inverted box pleat in the skirt part."[3] Mottelee seems to indicate a woven cloth with figured designs, sometimes quite an elaborate figured pattern, often in the same color or in another, or parti-colored.

> Beaver was called 'hair'. Just when beaver was first employed for hats is not known but it is recorded that beaver hats were imported from Flanders before the end of the fourteenth century.[4]

It was after 1300, that felts and beavers were dyed in colors; previously the general color of felt was black.

> The abacot was a variety of hat which was much worn in this and succeeding centuries. It was of felt, leather or beaver (introduced from Flanders, as a result of the Hundred Years' War), and might be parti-colored -- the crown of white, the brim of red (or any other combination of colors). The crown was conical or round; the brim was turned up front or back; the sharp peak, back or front, was a distinctive feature.[5] The brim might be plain, or cut in scallops or sharp points.

His forked beard was quite attractive. In wearing this beard, he was like his Saxon ancestors.[6]

Buskins, or short, neatly clasped, or laced boots still showed

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[3] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. ... Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, p. 258.

[4] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 41.

[5] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 112.

[6] Reginald Reynolds, Beards (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1949), p. 84.

sharp points. "Cordevain (Cordova leather) was excellent for making the shoes!"[7] Some boots and shoes "were of red-and-white checked leather,"[8] while others frequently were of colored leather ornamented with gold. His boots were elegantly fastened with rich clasps.

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Glossary

Abacot - a variety of hat of felt, leather, or beaver, conical or round crown, turned up front or back brim, sharp front or back peak.

Buskins - short, neatly clasped, or laced boots.

Cordevain - Cordova leather; name cordwainer given to shoemaker because he used a special kind of leather then imported from Cordova, Spain.

Motley - (mottelee) woven cloth with figured designs; the same color, another or parti-colored.

Tunic - laced down front and sides, forming an inverted box pleat in the skirt part.

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[7] Ibid., p. 111.

[8] Elizabeth Sage, A Study of Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 76.

CLERK

A Clerk ther was of Oxenford also,
That unto logyk hadde longe ygo.
As leene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake,
But looked holwe, and therto sobrely.
Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy;
For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice,
Ne was so worldly for to have office.
. . . . . .
Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.[1]

The term 'clerk' was applied to any ecclesiastical student as well as to a man in holy orders. Chaucer's Clerk, though he had long since proceeded to logic was still pursuing his studies, perhaps in preparation for his Master's degree.[2]

Grave, hollow-cheeked, and chiefly concerned with studying, he spoke correctly, modestly, briefly, and to the point, yet with due respect and formality. His talk centered on moral things, gladly would he learn and gladly teach. This ideal went with learning and poverty. His goldless money box was aided by contributions which he spent for books and schooling. In exchange for the money gifts, he earnestly prayed for their souls' salvation.

His overeste courtepy was badly worn. The dress of a youthful student "wears what seems to be a houppelande of only knee-length, which has bag-sleeves."[3]

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 22.

[2] Ibid., p. 759.

[3] Mary G. Houston, Medieval Costume in England and France (4, 5 & 6 Soho Square London W.: Adam & Charles Black, 1939), p. 120.


Holy
Bible

> The name houppelande 'was probably derived from the Spanish hopalanda, a long, fur-lined gown worn by students. It was buttoned close about the neck, even to the ears at times, and down the front, or at least part way. Snug-fitting about the shoulders, it flared out at the bottom. The sleeves were long and snug, or loose and flowing. Not only was the houppelande often lined with fur, but it was edged with fur about the neck and sleeves. It was usually unbelted.[4]

The common man "was compelled to content himself with a very short"[5] hood, "of a coarse weave,"[6] because he was one of "the less dressy ones."[7] "Cowls or hoods were favorite headgear for the lower classes; they also wore wide hats of felt or straw, or caps tied under the chin."[8] The coif, apparently a facsimile of the baby's bonnet tied under the chin, "worn by men in medieval Europe was always white."[9]

The "kind of high, rolled shoes, or buskins, used by the peasants and lower classes"[10] were worn.

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[4] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 110.

[5] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 39.

[6] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 40.

[7] Loc. cit.

[8] Walkup, op. cit., p. 115.

[9] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 40.

[10] Walkup, op. cit., p. 115.

Glossary

Coif - facsimile of the baby's bonnet.

Courtepy - upper short coat.

Cowls - hoods, Planche calls hoods capuchons or cowls.

Houppelande - derived from the Spanish hopalanda, a long, fur-lined gown worn by students.

Overeste - upper.

SERGEANT OF THE LAW

A Sergeant of the Lawe, war and wys,
That often hadde been at the Parvys,
Ther was also, full riche of excellence.
Discreet he was and of great reverence --
He semed swich, his wordes weren so wise.
Justice he was ful often in assise.
By patente and by pleyn commissioun.
For his science and for his heigh renoun,
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
. . . . . .
Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
And yet he semed bisier than he was.
. . . . . .
He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote,
Girt with a ceint of silk, with barres smale;
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.[1]

On the Canterbury pilgrimage the Lawyer naturally was not dressed in his full official robes and was not extravagant in his apparel, either, as, although when on duty, he wore rich robes, gifts of clients. He had long practiced legal discourses, composed and drew up legal papers, which never were invalidated. Not only could he recite every statute by heart, but also at the tip of his tongue, in precise terms, he knew all the cases and decisions since King William the Conqueror.

To show that they are graduates in law, every lawyer wears a badge, a white silk coif, in court. That was their chief and distinguishing ensign of habit and was worn in the highest places, even before kings. Their splendid robes were rich in color.

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 22.

> The sergeant-at-law's dress was a medley coat, with a girdle of silk, ornamented with small bars or stripes of different colours. (A Harleian MS. marked 980, informs us that the sergeant-at-law's robe was formerly partly-coloured, in order to command respect, as well as to his person as to his profession. He wore a cape about his shoulders, furred with lamb's skin, a hood with two labels upon it, and a coif of white silk, when in the exercise of his profession.[2]

> When Chaucer says he rode 'but homely in a medley coat,' it is a mistake to suppose that he was clothed in a sedate garment of a pepper-and-salt mixture, as some commentators have suggested. The term 'medley' here and 'motley' in the description of the Merchant have been much misunderstood. The best evidence seems to indicate that by 'medley' was meant then a cloth dyed in the wool. . . .[3]

> He rode in homely style with a gown 'parti-coloured and one side barred or striped with different colours,' confined by a girdle of silk with small cross-bars. 'The hood was often treated in the same manner, and both were lined or edged with lambskin having the fur dressed outwards, and known as 'budge.' Sergeants-at-law were originally priests, and as such wore the tonsure, but after priests were forbidden to interfere with secular affairs, sergeants continued to shave their heads, and wore the coif of linen, afterward of silk, for distinction.[4]

"Brown and green stripes"[5] were the colors of his official robe.

> The tabard (sometimes called a surcoat) was probably derived from the dalmatic. In its simplest form, it was an oblong with a hole in the center for the head. Older men wore it over a

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[2] James Robinson Planche, History of British Costume (London: George Bell and Sons, York Street, Convent Garden, 1874), pp. 169-170.

[3] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light on Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), p. 144.

[4] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, p. 259.

[5] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 761.

long tunic or cote-hardie. . . . ('Tabard,' as may be recalled, was also the name of the inn). Lawyers preferred the tabard to other garb.[6]

-o-

Glossary

Coif - a close-fitting cap, facsimile of the baby's bonnet.

Medley - a cloth dyed in the wool.

Tabard - surcoat; an oblong with a hole in the center for the head.

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[6] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 110.

FRANKLIN

A Frankeleyn was in his compaignye.
Whit was his berd as is the dayesye;
Of his complexious he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn;
To lyven in delit was evere his wone,
For he was Epicurus owene sone,
That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit
Was verraily felicitee parfit.
. . . . . .
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;
Ful ofte tyme he was knyght of the shire.
An anlaas and a gipser al of silk
Heeng at his girdel, whit as morne milk.
A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour.
Was nowher swich a worthy vavasour.[1]

A worthy vavasour, a public man, a sire of sessions, a knight of the shire, only below the knight in rank and raiment, according to statute, yet unlike his companion, trained to war, but essentially a man of peace, was this Franklin. This country magnate represented a gentleman of great wealth, obviously living chiefly on his own estate. His hearty hospitality was profuse. Such hospitality must have given him general popularity.

> A man's body was conceived as being composed of the four elements, earth, water, air and fire in due proportions. Earth was thought to be cold and dry, water cold and moist, air hot and moist, fire hot and dry. . . . A man's character could be roughly defined by reference to them, and their proportion decided his 'humour', e. g. a sanguine man (like the Franklin) was held to be hot and moist, which gave him the character of being a laughing, amorous, high-coloured, fleshy, good-natured fellow, with many desires and capacities.[2]

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), pp. 22-23.

[2] Nevill Coghill, Chaucer The Canterbury Tales (London and Beccles: William Clowes and Sons, Ltd., 1951), p. 516.

Bearded white as a daisy, ruddy of face and sanguine of temper, a combination of striking personal traits identified this portrait immediately.

> The high coloring resulting from the Franklin's sanguine temperament combined with the whiteness of his beard calls up a striking and unforgettable figure. The accuracy of the comparison used by Chaucer of the Franklin's beard is noteworthy. He does not say it is white as snow, but white as is a daisy. When one remembers that the English daisy is tipped with red, and thinks of the Franklin's beard against the background of his ruddy complexion, the appropriateness of the comparison seems perfect.[3]

This typical country squire "in holiday attire, radiates an atmosphere of good wine and good cheer.[4] "A short dagger and a pouch of silk hung from his milk-white belt,"[5] which was as fresh and white as morning's milk. He has a "white silk purse,"[6] and his dagger was "two-edged."[7] "Pouches or purses, called gypcieres, hung at the girdle; in those pouches was often thrust an anelace or knife. (The Franklin in the Canterbury Tales wore such a pouch and knife).[8]

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[3] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light on Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), p. 158.

[4] Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., The Prologue From Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1899), p. lvii.

[5] R. M. Lumiansky, The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), p. 6.

[6] Dion Clayton Calthrop, English Costume (London: Adam and Charles Clack, 1906), II, p. 67.

[7] Loc. cit.

[8] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 114.

Akelace - two-edged dagger.

Anelace - knife.

Anlas - dagger.

Gipciere - purse of silk.

Gipser - purse, pouch, game-bag.

Vavasour - sub-vassal; substantial landholder.

HABERDASHER, CARPENTER

WEAVER, DYER, TAPICER

An Haberdasshere and a Carpenter,
A Webbe, a Dyere, and a Tapycer, --
And they were clothed alle in o lyveree
Of a solempne and a greet fraternitee.
Full fressh and newe hir geere apiked was;
Hir knyves were chaped noght with bras
But al with silver; wroght ful clene and weel
Hire girdles and hir pouches everydeel.
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys
To sitten in a yeldehalle on a deys.
Everich, for the wisdom that he kan,
Was shaply for to been an alderman.
For catel hadde they ynogh and rente,
And eek hir wyves wholde it wel assente;
And elles certeyn were they to blame.
It is ful fair to been ycleped 'Madame,'
And goon to vigilies al bifore,
And have a mantel roialliche ybore.[1]

The five competent craftsmen "must have been Londoners,"[2] because the guild first originated "among the bishops and reeves of London."[3] Most of the manufacturing groups in the city were covered. They were not "labor unions;"[4] the controlling members, being all masters and employers of labor, did business on a very small scale. Men did undertake journeys for various purposes; and here, searching for different ends at the same goal, were a group

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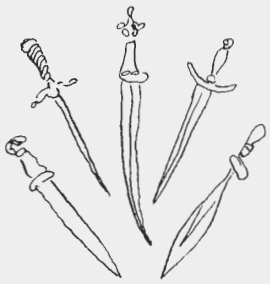
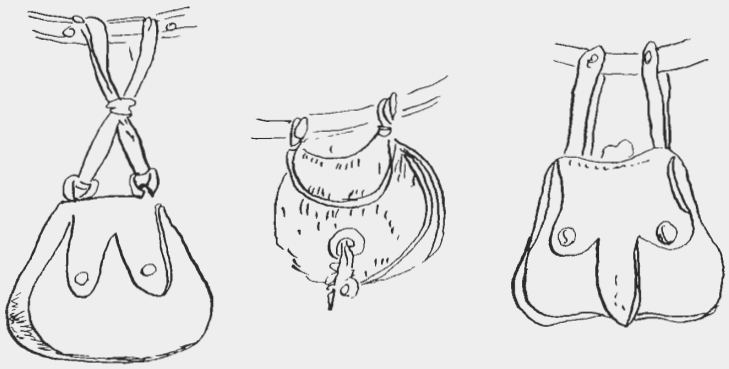
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 23.

[2] Norman G. Brett-James, Introducing Chaucer (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 85.

[3] Benjamin Terry, A History of England (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1901), p. 89.

[4] William Stearns Davis, Life on a Mediaeval Barony (New York: Harpers & Brothers, 1923), p. 361.





of chance companions. "One goes to pray, the other seeks profit; the third distraction, the fourth pleasure. To some the road is everything; to others its terminus."[5]

From the Statute of Appearel of 1363, it began with tradesmen and their wives who were to "wear cloth of certain low price, with no gold, or silver, or silk, or embroidery."[6] This enactment has shown that below the aristocracy all was not rude, crude, and miserable, but a certain amount of luxury was enjoyed. Dishonesty was prevalent; threads of wool and linen were woven into the "materials they sold for all silk."[7] Poor dyes caused much of the silk to lose its color.

The rather common-looking man, "in a plain cloth gown and flat cap,"[8] has been recognized as a member of the guild. His dress was a "combination of smock, the regulation dress of the poor, with the richer dress of the nobles."[9] A closely fitting tunic, the doublet or gipon, was worn over the shirt, a rarely visible undergarment.

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[5] Adolphus William Ward, Chaucer (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1902), p. 119.

[6] Henry Smith Williams, The Historians' History of the World (New York: The Outlook Company, 1905), XVIII, p. 477.

[7] Elizabeth Sage, A Study of Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 69.

[8] Edward L. Cutts, Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages (London: Simpkin Marshall, Ltd., Stationers' Hall Court, E.C. 4, 1930), p. 489.

[9] Katherine Morris Lester, Historic Costume (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, (c1925)), p. 91.

The gipon reached "to the knees;"[10] the cotte extended to "the calf."[11] The sleeveless cotehardie, or external garment, showed the loose fitting gipon's sleeves with cuffs. Dipping cloth in the dye vat required knee-length aprons.[12]

Well-fitting garments[13] and plain tunics were worn by some of the craftsmen. "Tight-fitting waists buttoned down the front and reached half-way down the thigh;"[14] long or short sleeves were "attached to this."[15] The shortness of his jacket skirt was sometimes "not more than six inches below his belt."[16] The symmetry of their legs was displayed, either in "tight-fitting 'hosen,'"[17] or in tights. The feet were in pointed shoes a little longer than the foot. A conical hood with a self brim pulled down in front shaded the face and turned up in the back.

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[10] Iris Brooke, English Costume From the Fourteenth Through the Nineteenth Century (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 16.

[11] Marjorie Quennell and Charles Henry Bourne Quennell, A History of Everyday Things in England 1066-1799 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. 60.

[12] George Macaulay Trevelyan, Illustrated English Social History (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949), Picture No. 55.

[13] Ibid., Picture No. 56.

[14] Elizabeth Sage, A Study of Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 70.

[15] Loc. cit.

[16] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), p. 156.

[17] Trevelyan, op. cit., p. 24.

The importance placed upon the pouches, knives, and jewellery obviously played a very important part in their attire.[18] Newly decorated silver mounted knives, "not tipped with brass,"[19] may have been "for their craft and not for defence."[20] Their belts and pouches were "in every respect well and cleanly made."[21] They "all carry pouches, girdles, and knives."[22]

> Men when hunting and riding carried knives stuck through their wallets, and these they often used when at meals. . . . Both knives and spoons, likely nearly everything else in this period, were generally of beautiful design and workmanship.[23]

-o-

Glossary

Cotehardie - external garment.

Doublet - men's close fitting jacket.

Gipon - a pourpoint, often worn over (originally under) pourpoint, (something quilted, a quilted doublet).

Tunic - garment like a shirt or gown.

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[18] Iris Brooke, English Costume from the Fourteenth Through the Nineteenth Century (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 28.

[19] John S. P. Tatlock and Percy Mackaye, The Complete Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), p. 7.

[20] Brett-James, op. cit., p. 79.

[21] R. M. Lumiansky, The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), p. 7.

[22] Dion Clayton Calthrop, English Costume (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906), II, p. 67.

[23] Quennell, op. cit., p. 126.

COOK

A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones
To boille the chiknes with the marybones,
And poudre-marchant tart and galyngale.
Wel koude he knowe a draughte of Londoun ale.
He koude rooste, and sethe, and broille, and frye,
Maken mortreux, and wel bake a pye.
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,
That on his shyne a mormal hadde he.
For blankmanger, that made he with the beste.[1]

The guildsmen have a cook with them for the trip, whose description is short, but typical. He is clearly an individual, "skilful in his calling, yet with an individual touch, -- an ulcer on his shin."[2] This "dry-scabbed"[3] sore, which was a pity, had no connection with his calling. Being a connoisseur, with even a touch of warm-hearted appreciation, he certainly made the best chicken-in-cream, "blancmange, which was composed of chicken, sugar, cream, and flour."[4]

His "body garment is a tunic gathered into the waist by a belt, and having full sleeves finishing in a band at the wrist,"[5]

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 23.

[2] John Strong Perry Tatlock, The Mind and Art of Chaucer (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1950), p. 100.

[3] Robinson, op. cit., p. 762.

[4] Robert Balwain Mowat, A New History of Great Britian (London: Oxford University Press, 1922), p. 150.

[5] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, p. 261.

with a wide "bateau neck."[6] This tunic was worn to the knees.

He wears "coarse cloth hose and strong black leather shoes."[7] His beard was "generally kept short and pointed, sometimes forked;"[8] while he wore short hair and shaved the back of his neck.[9] His hat is a very usual one "having the brim turned down in front and up behind, or vice versa."[10]

> The author of Piers Plowman exhorts mayors to apply the pillory more strictly to --
>
> Brewsters and bakers, butchers and cooks;
> For these are men on this mould that most harm worken
> To the poor people that piece-meal buyen:
> For they poison the people privily and oft . . .
>
> A lurid commentary on these lines may be found in a presentment of the twelve jurors at the Norwich leet-court. 'All the men of Sprowston sell sausages and puddings and knowingly buy measly pigs; and they sell in Norwich market the aforesaid sausages and pigs, unfit for human bodies.'[11]

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[6] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), p. 141.

[7] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, p. 261.

[8] Mary G. Houston, Medieval Costume in England and France (4, 5 & 6 Soho Square London W.: Adam & Charles Black, 1939), p. 84.

[9] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 58.

[10] Norris, op. cit., p. 261.

[11] G. G. Coulton, Chaucer and His England (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950), pp. 131-132.

Glossary

Bateau neck - an oral neckline of a dress following the line of the collarbone, high in front and back, and broad at the sides.

SHIPMAN

A Shipman was ther, wonynge fer by weste;
For aught I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.
He rood upon a rouncy, as he kouthe,
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.
A daggere hangynge on a laas hadde he
Aboute his nekke, under his arm adoun.
The hoote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun;
And certeinly he was a good felawe.
For many a draughte of wyn had he ydrawe
Fro Burdeux-ward, whil that the chapman sleep.
Of nyce conscience took he no keep.
If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,
His stremes, and his daungers hym bisides,
His herberwe, and his moone, his lodemenage,
Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.
Hardy he was and wys to undertake;
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.
He knew alle the havenes, as they were,
Fro Gootlond to the cape of Fynystere,
And every cryke in Britaigne and in Spayne.
His barge ycleped was the Maudelayne.[1]

As the cavalcade moves on, the picturesque Skipper came from the far west. "It is also probable that the Shipman was a real character, John Hawley, a well-known West Country semipirate from Dartmouth."[2] He paid no heed or warning to conscience, "there was little or no law on the sea save that of the strongest."[3] This competent and skillful skipper estimated tides, moon, currents, dangers, harbours, weather, and cargo-stowing with outstanding ability.

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 23.

[2] Norman G. Brett-James, Introducing Chaucer (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 94.

[3] George Macaulay Trevelyan, England in the Age of Wycliffe (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1904), p. 54.

The hot summer sun had given him a heavily tanned hue. Many a tempest had shaken his beard.

> His surcote is of falding and comes to below the knee. . . . Buttoning at the throat, it has a low stand-up neckband. In the figure of the Shipman taken from the Ellesmere MS. he has a turned-down collar attached to the neckband. The felt hat has a wide brim turned up in front; a dagger is carried under the arm by a cord passing over the shoulder.[4]

"Falding was a coarse woollen cloth."[5] The poor used this coarse cloth for heavy service, and this was the kind of cloth they had to wear.[6] The use of warm materials was the most outstanding characteristic of the time.[7]

The Law finally had to regulate the shoes' lengths.[8] "The great mass of the people were limited to six inches."[9] The lower classes used buskins, or short, laced boots.[10]

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[4] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, p. 260.

[5] Mary G. Houston, Medieval Costume in England and France (4, 5 & 6 Soho Square London W.: Adam & Charles Black, 1939), p. 222.

[6] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 109.

[7] Loc. cit.

[8] Katherine Morris Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, Accessories of Dress (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1940), p. 261.

[9] Loc. cit.

[10] Walkup, op. cit., p. 126.

Glossary

Buskins - high boots worn by country folk and travellers.

Falding - coarse woollen cloth.

DOCTOR OF PHYSIC

With us ther was a Doctour of Phisik;
In al this world ne was ther noon hym lik,
To speke of phisik and of surgerye,
For he was grounded in astronomye.
He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel
In houres by his magyk natureel.
Wel koude he fortunen the ascendent
Of his ymages for his pacient.
He knew the cause of everich maladye,
Were it of hoot, or coold, or moyste, or drye,
And where they engendred, and of what humour.
He was a verray, parfit praktisour:
The cause yknowe, and of his harm the roote,
Anon he yaf the sike man his boote.
Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries
To sende hym drogges and his letuaries.
For ech of hem made oother for to wynne --
Hir frendshipe nas nat newe to bigynne.
. . . . . .
Of his diete mesurable was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of greet norissyng and digestible.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,
Lyned with taffata and with sendal;
And yet he was but esy of dispence;
He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
For gold in phisik is a cordial,
Therefore he lovede gold in special.[1]

Chaucer's Doctor had personal touches, he did not devote much study to the Bible, either he was "too busy or too pagan to do so."[2] He was temperate in his diet, not too much, yet nourishing, digestible, simple food. Why was there not another Physician like him in

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), pp. 23-24.

[2] Norman G. Brett-James, Introducing Chaucer (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 101.

all the world? He was an expert not only in physic and surgery, but also in astronomy. "What astronomy had to do with it all seems hard to explain, especially as it was really astrology in which he specialized."[3] His patients were skillfully and carefully observed through the astrological hours. He knew all the signs of the zodiac, each sign supposedly governed some part of the body, just as he knew the humors of the malady.

He was habited in a gown lined with taffeta or sendal, the latter "a woven silk material."[4] "Rich, bright colors were still popular -- sangwin, a rich red, and pers, a deep blue, were the favorite shades."[5] A much-used dark blue cloth was called "pers."[6] Poor dyes were used quite extensively, therefore much of the silk did not hold its color.

> Almuce - (Almucium or Almuce). This was a large cape, often with hood attached, of cloth turned down over the shoulders and lined with fur. Doctors of Divinity and canons wore it lined with grey fur, and others dark-brown fur. The cape was edged with little fur tails, and two long lappets hung down in front about as far as the knee.[7]

Speaking about the Physician, Williams mentioned his "cloak

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[3] Ibid., p. 100.

[4] Mary G. Houston, Medieval Costume in England and France (4, 5 & 6 Soho Square London W.: Adam & Charles Black, 1939), p. 150.

[5] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 109.

[6] Elizabeth Sage, A Study of Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 69.

[7] Houston, op. cit., p. 149.

and his furred hood."[8] Cloaks were of different styles, long and loose, circular or square, with or without the hood, buttoned with two or three buttons or wide at the neck, while some had collars and lapels of fur.[9] The masculine costume was nearly always "finished with a black leather belt, from which hung a triangular pouch and dagger."[10]

> In another part of his works, Chaucer speaks of a physician who was 'clad in a scarlet gown and furred well, as such a one ought to be.' In the Vision of Piers Plowman, a physician is described as wearing in addition a hood and cloke lines with calabre, 'the fur of squirrels in deep brown colour imported from Calabria.'[11]

-o-

Glossary

Almuce - almucium, almuce, a large cape.

Cendal - woven silk material, came in all colors, either plain or striped.

Pers - a deep blue color; also a much-used dark blue cloth.

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[8] Henry Smith Williams, The Historians' History of the World (New York: The Outlook Company, 1905), XVIII, p. 479.

[9] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 58.

[10] Loc. cit.

[11] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, pp. 258-259.

WIFE OF BATH

A good Wif was ther of biside Bathe,
But she was somdel deef, and that was scathe.
Of clooth-makyng she hadde swich an haunt,
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon
That to the offrynge bifore hire sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs ful fyne weren of ground;
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
That on a Sonday weren upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite yteyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe.
Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve:
Housbondes at chirche dore she hadde fyve,
Withouten oother compaignye in youthe, --
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nowthe.
. . . . . .
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Upon an amblere eaily she sat,
Ywympled wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felaweshipe wel knude she laughe and carpe.
Of remedies of love she knew her chaunce,
For she koude of that art the olde daunce.[1]

Who can compare with this gadabout gossiper and her catalogue of husbands? Talk about our modern movie stars. They did not hold a candle to her. A superb creation. Yet with all of her charm and vitality, she is profane, obscene. Everyone heard her loud, racy, salty, homely shouts. Why not? She is deaf. As loud in her dress

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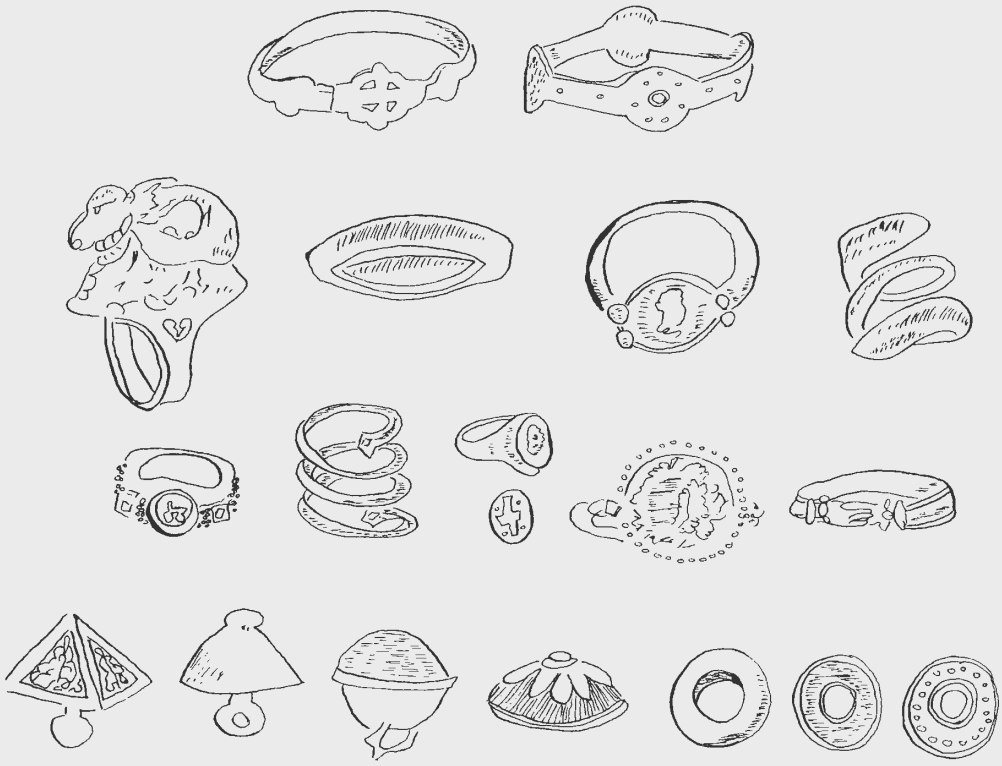
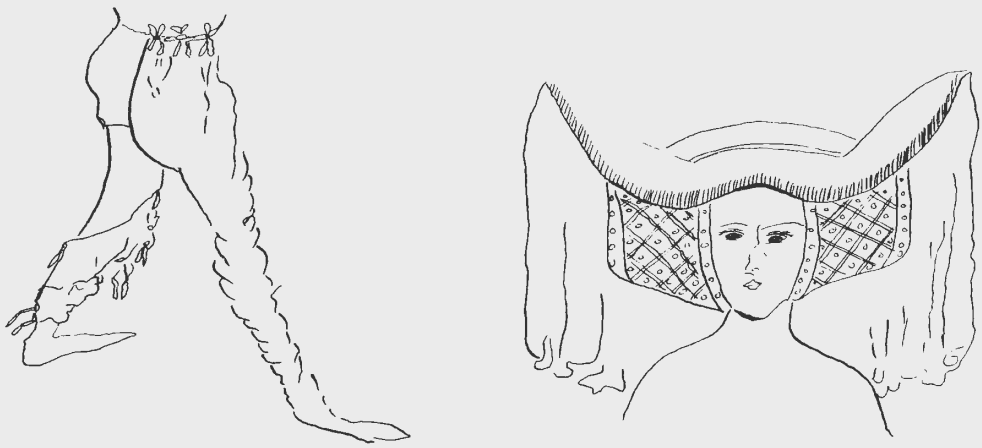
[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 24.





as in her voice, "she is hearty humanity unredeemed."[2] Nine parts pagan, she is Christian, too, having brief moments of doubt as to the welfare of her immortal soul, but hastily brushes aside such "morbid misgivings."[3] Her hypocritical infidelities are her glory. Even though an energy furnace, a bonfire, kindling heat rather than light, she does not warm the hands and heart and was not as bright as she used to be. Her friendships are real; she likes people and they undoubtedly like her in return. She seems as if she was ageless.

Besides being deaf, she was gat-toothed, with a bold, fair, red face. Rouge was used for the first time by the English women.[4] A powdered dentifrice was in fashion for whitening the teeth.[5] Hair, showing on the back of the neck below the caul, was plucked, and eyebrows, too, were plucked to a thin line.[6] "Eyeblack was heavily used."[7]

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[2] Howard Rollin Patch, On Rereading Chaucer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939), p. 161.

[3] Percy Van Dyke Shelly, The Living Chaucer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940), p. 222.

[4] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 48.

[5] Loc. cit.

[6] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 58.

[7] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), pp. 118-119.

The gown, fitting remarkably close to the waist, had "an excessively full skirt splaying out from the hips"[8] and hung "in heavy folds from the waist,"[9] -- like profusely hung draperies. It was during this time that the ladies began to wear linen undergarments, chemise, or robe-linge.[10] Ladies allowed a glimpse of the underlinens by cutting pocket-like slits in the hips and front of the skirt, thus enabling "the wearer to reach the belt underneath, which carried the purse and other paraphernalia of femine occupation."[11] Attention was attracted to the display of "rich design or violently contrasting colour."[12] Vanity led to deception. "Only that part of the chemise which could be seen was made of linen, and the remainder of the old time woolen material."[13] Details varied; even the rounded or square fairly low cut neck and sleeves displayed the kirtle. The sleeves were unbuttoned from wrist to elbow; when working at some

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[8] Iris Brooke, Western European Costume Thirteenth to Seventeenth Century and Its Relation to the Theatre (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1939), p. 48.

[9] Marjorie Quennell and Charles Henry Bourne Quennell, A History of Everyday Things in England 1066-1799 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. 60.

[10] Katherine Morris Lester, Historic Costume (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, (c1925)), p. 98.

[11] Brooke, op. cit., p. 48.

[12] Loc. cit.

[13] Lester, op. cit., p. 99.

domestic employment, they were rolled back.[14]

The simple style of her dress was composed of "expensive materials which she wove herself."[15] Speaking about her reputation for her superior cloth, a modern commentator says that the "West Country cloth had so bad a reputation that it had to be sold unrolled so as to avoid fraud."[16] "On high days and hold days she was accustomed to a gay scarlet gown."[17] Her gracefully hanging "semicircular cloak richly lined with furs or contrasting materials"[18] concealed her large, broad hips and reached to the ankles.[19]

A foot mantle seems to have been her only special riding garment, which ordinarily "meant saddle-cloth, . . . an outer skirt."[20] It appeared "to be a large cloth draped around each leg and tied in at the ankles. In the Ellesmere manuscript . . . the wife of Bath is represented in such a garment."[21] It kept her gown from being

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[14] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, p. 264.

[15] Ibid., p. 265.

[16] Norman G. Brett-James, Introducing Chaucer (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 97.

[17] R. M. Lumiansky, The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), p. 8.

[18] Brooke, op. cit., p. 52.

[19] Norris, op. cit., II, p. 264.

[20] Robinson, op. cit., p. 765.

[21] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), p. 170.

splashed and also kept her warm.

She still wore the coverchief, or kerchief, "which had not been in style since the middle of the century."[22] A piece of fabric, either cotton or linen, square, oblong or circular in shape, hanging to the shoulders or below, was the principle head-covering for women in the Middle Ages. Being a continuation of the palla, it was known as the "couvrechef, headrail, or wimple."[23] (See Note 3 for Second Nun.) They were sufficiently ample to envelop the shoulders, and, frequently, fell to the waist.

> . . . women used the palla or mantle as headcovering or a white headcloth of linen or silk draped over the head and round the neck. This piece was the couvre-chef, coverchief, headtire, headrail or wimple, which also served as headtire when traveling . . . the preference seems to have been for white and saffron.[24]

Her headkerchief weighed ten pounds. The masculine style of the large felt hat was copied by the women and worn over the wimple. "For travel, a flat-brimmed, low, round-crowned hat (similar to the Greek petasos), tied under the chin with cords, was used."[25] Her hat was as broad as a buckler or target. Various materials were used

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[22] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light on Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), pp. 230-231.

[23] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 39.

[24] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), pp. 43-44.

[25] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 118.

linen, fustian, linsey-woolsey, galebrun, russet, buckram, felt, straw, and other stuffs, but "her kerchiefs were full fine of texture."[26]

The fashionable hose were fitted and sewn by hand; the

> . . . fitting took the form of gussets laid in about the ankle, and these no doubt were the origin of the modern 'clock.' The embroidery stitches were probably added to hide the seam. . . . By the middle of the century the hose had reached the hip and was fastened by means of points, . . . Points were ties or laces, often of silk or braid and equipped with metal tags.[27]

at the end,[28] and were used to fasten various parts of the civilian attire together. Her fine scarlet red hose of cloth were carefully tied and gartered. The garters "were the same color as their bracelets and fitted close above and below the knee."[29] Her shoes were full soft, new, uncracked, moist and well spurred.

Heavy demands were made upon the goldsmith by the fashion world. "Intaglios and cameos showing the portrait of the owner were among the favorite styles"[30] which were most frequently used as betrothal, wedding, and gift rings. In The Vision of Piers Plowman,

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[26] John S. P. Tatlock and Percy Mackaye, The Complete Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), p. 8.

[27] Katherine Morris Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, Accessories of Dress (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1940), p. 288.

[28] Katherine Morris Lester, Historic Costume (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, (c1925)), p. 99.

[29] Katherine Morris Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, Accessories of Dress (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1940), p. 303.

[30] Ibid., p. 335.

the poet tells of a richly adorned lady,

> . . . her garments purfled, faced, or trimmed with fine furs, her robe of a scarlet colour in grain, and splendidly adorned with ribands of red gold, interspersed with precious stones of great value. Her head-tire, he says, he has not time to describe, but she wore a crown that even the king had no better. Her fingers were all embellished with rings of gold, set with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires, and also with Oriental stones or amulets to prevent any venomous infection.[31]

"In the Lais of Marie de France we read of rings of 'fine gold, weighing full an ounce, set with garnets most precious with letters graven thereon.'"[32]

The Monk of Glastonbury said the women wore such strait clothes "that they had long fox-tails sewed within their garments to holde them forth."[33]

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[31] James Robinson Planche, History of British Costume (London: George Bell and Sons, York Street, Convent Garden, 1874), p. 144.

[32] Lester, op. cit., p. 335.

[33] Planche, loc. cit.

Glossary

Cameo - a precious stone carved so that there is a raised part on the background.

Chemise - linen undergarments, robe-linge.

Couvrechef - headcloth draped over the head and round the neck.

Foot-mantle - outer skirt; large cloth to be draped around each leg.

Headrail - same as couvrechef.

Intaglio - an engraving so cut into a stone or other hard material that the design is sunk below the surface of the material and what would ordinarily be elevations are hollows.

Kirtle - undergarments.

Palla - mantle, as a headcovering.

Petasos - a broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat.

Wimple - couvrechef.

PARSON

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre Persoun of a Toun,
But riche he was of hooly thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parisshens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient,
And swich he was ypreved ofte sithes.
Ful looth were hym to cursen for his tithes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Unto his povre parisshens aboute
Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce.
He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer asonder,
But he ne lefte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
In siknesse nor in meschief to visite
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte.
. . . . . .
A bettre preest I trowe that nowher noon ys.
He waited after no pompe and reverence.
Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
But Cristes loore and his apostles twelve
He taughte, but first he folwed it hymselve.[1]

Applying the Biblical teachings to his own daily life, he was a brightly burning, brilliant light. Although he was poor in earthly goods, he was rich in holy thoughts and deeds, being revered as a powerful and living reality. A real messenger of Heaven, a learned man, a clerk, teaching and practicing the Gospel, he was sympathetic to the simple, severe with the stubborn, endeavoring to draw all men

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), pp. 24-25.

by fairness and good example; that first he wrought and afterward he taught. He added a similitude that if gold rust, what shall iron do? For if a priest upon whom they trust be foul, no wonder if an ignorant layman be corrupt. This shepherd is the greatest of his age, yet the poor Parson of the town, who "is beloved and venerated by all and neglected by all; he serves all and is served by none."[2]

Gathering from the canons of synods and the injunctions of bishops,

> . . . the clergy were expected to wear their clothes not too gay in colour, and not too fashionably cut; that they were to abstain from wearing ornaments or carrying arms; and that their horse furniture was to be in the same severe style.[3]

> The priest's under dress consists of a 'black cassock or gown, . . . over his cassock or gown he first puts on the amice, then the alb, which he girds around him a cincture, then the maniple on his left arm, the stole on his neck, crossed on his breast, and the chasuble or outer garment."[4]

Priests were requested to wear gowns as were used in the universities, with standing collars, the sleeves either straight at the hands, or wide sleeves. They usually wore on their various journeys

> . . . cloaks with sleeves, commonly called Priests' Cloaks without guards, welts, long buttons, or cuts. And no ecclasiastical person shall wear any coif, or wrought nightcap, but

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[2] Norman G. Brett-James, Introducing Chaucer (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 121.

[3] Edward L. Cutts, Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages (London: Simpkin Marshall, Ltd. Stationers' Hall Court, E.C. 4, 1930), pp. 241-242.

[4] Samuel W. Barnum, Romanism As It Is (Hartford, Conn.: Connecticut Publishing Company, 1871) pp. 259-260.

plain nightcaps of black silk, satin, or velvet.[5]

In private, the priest might wear any comely and scholarly apparel, "provided that it be not cut or pinkt; and that in public they go not in their doublet and hose without coats or cassocks."[6]

They were not permitted to wear any light-coloured hose. If some poor soul could not provide himself with a long gown, he could go in a short gown of the fashion aforesaid. With some variations, the priest's vesture is "the ancient Roman dress of State."[7]

The length of the toes were regulated by sumptuary laws, "a half foot"[8] was given to the commoner. Both sexes wore socklike inner shoes, usually of linen. In bad weather a walking boot protected the shoe. This fabric or leather walking boot was "shod with a cork sole and was roomy enough to pull on easily."[9] Four whalebones held the leg section up, and a ribbon loop at the top hooked over a button at the knee. "There were 'night boots' of heavy warm fabrics for house wear and fur boots for the clergy when

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[5] Cutts, op. cit., p. 251.

[6] Cutts, op. cit., p. 251.

[7] Darnum, op. cit., p. 259.

[8] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Footwear (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 68.

[9] Loc. cit.

performing nocturnal ceremonies in the cold churches."[10] He wore a biretta, because he came out of the village church in "cassock and biretta."[11]

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Glossary

Alb - (from Latin albus - white) white linen tunic covering the whole person down to the feet. It is the toga or loose outer garment of the ancient Romans.

Amice - (amict) piece of linen cloth worn on the head and round the neck.

Biretta - (birretus or biretta) closely fitting and pointed cap, usually black, worn by the clergy; sometimes called simply the cap.

Bourdon - a walking staff, a pilgrim's staff.

Cassock - long coat, usually black.

Chasuble - outer garment; "the vestment" properly so called.

Cincture - girdle.

Coif - a close-fitting skull cap, fastened under the chin.

Doublet - tight-fitting short tunic, originally made a double material with padding inside.

Maniple - sort of scarf that the priest wears on his left arm.

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[10] Loc. cit.

[11] Edward L. Cutts, Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages (London: Simpkin Marshall, Ltd., Stationers' Hall Court, E. C. 4, 1930), p. 490.

PLOWMAN

With hym ther was a Plowman, was his brother,
That hadde ylad of dong ful many a fother;
A trewe swynkere and a good was he,
Lyvynge in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best with al his hoole herte
At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,
And thanne his neighebor right as hymselve.
He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and delve,
For Cristes sake, for every povre wight,
Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.
His tithes payde he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel.
In a tabard he rood upon a mere.[1]

What a beautiful motto the Plowman daily practiced, God first, others second, and himself third. His rugged, kindly face, a face which lacked the finer lines of thought, and his back, bent with toil by his excessive labor for others, shows us his benevolence. Great humility was in evidence when he rode in a tabard and on a mare. His goodness shone out all the brighter with this company of pilgrims. He was the ideal Christian.

The land was filled with small farms and farmers, of whom he was "the humble tenant, who was no longer at the bidding of his lord."[2] Yet he had goods and chattels because he paid his tithes and was very kind to the poor.

> Whereas from earliest times the masculine dress of Europeans had been loose and easy, its tailoring never more intricate than that of a smock. . . . It may sometimes have been worn directly

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 25.

[2] Henry Smith Williams, The Historians' History of the World (New York: The Outlook Company, 1905), XVIII, p. 478.

> over the washable chemise, sometimes over a garment corresponding to the earlier cote. . . . Bulky underdrawers were a universal masculine garment.[3]

A smock or cote of the old cut was worn on top of his chemise, "put on over his head and held in at the waist by a leather belt."[4]

> The tabard (sometimes called a surcoat) was probably derived from the dalmatic. In its simplest form, it was an oblong with a hole in the center for the head, . . . Older men wore it over a long tunic or cote-hardie. The ploughman, in the Canterbury Tales, wore a tabard ("Tabard" as may be recalled was the name of the inn).
>
> . . . . . .
>
> These were the smock-frock, or full tunic, of canvas, fustian, russet, galebrun, or other coarse material.[5]

William Langland wrote in the Complaint of Piers Plowman about the contrast between the poor working man and the wealthy churchman.

His description of the ploughman shows how pitiful and poverty was his condition:

> His cote was of a cloute, that cary was y-called,
> His hood was full of holes, and his hair oute,
> With his knopped schon (shoes) clouted full thykke . . .
> His hosen overhangen his hokschynes, on each side . . .[6]

Well dressed men wore neat-fitting hose, while the poorer class "went partially bare-legged, or wore long drawers cross gartered to the knee, or bandaged their legs with straw and cloth strips. The straw afforded extra warmth in cold weather."[7]

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[3] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), p. 135.

[4] Ibid., p. 160.

[5] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), pp. 110-115.

[6] Iris Brooke, English Costume From the Fourteenth Through the Nineteenth Century (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 26.

[7] Barton, loc. cit.

In harvest time, the farmer wore, "if he did not wear a hood, a peaked hat or a round, large brimmed straw hat."[8] He wore a tabard, "with his hat, scrip, and staff."[9] Round hats "with a close thick brim,"[10] and having "strings through the brim so that the hat could be strung on the belt when not in use,"[11] were worn. The favorite headgear for the lower classes were the cowls or hoods; "they also wore wide hats of felt or straw, or caps tied under the chin."[12]

Footwear worn by the peasants and lower classes were the "high, rolled shoes, or buskins."[13] His knees were hardened and horny with frequent kneeling.

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[8] Dion Clayton Calthrop, English Costume (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906), II, p. 46.

[9] James Robinson Planche, History of British Costume (London: George Bell and Sons, York Street, Convent Garden, 1874), p. 170.

[10] Calthrop, op. cit., p. 26.

[11] Calthrop, op. cit., p. 26.

[12] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 115.

[13] Loc. cit.

Glossary

Smock - cote, made of the old cut, worn on top of the chemise, tunic, or cote-hardie, put on over the head, held in at the waist by a leather belt.

Tabard - oblong surcoat, with a hole in the center for the head.

> A strong prejudice existed against red hair, which, it was believed, harbored undesirable qualities in the character of the person so unfortunate as to possess it.[4]

His beard was broad and red as a fox. The red-bristled wart on the tip of his nose was like the bristles on a sow's ears. Why the sow's ears? Are the bristles redder there than the other bristles? His nostrils were wide and black; his mouth was as huge as a large furnace.

> The 'Miller,' Chaucer says, was 'a stout chorle and a proud quarrelsome fellow,' and when he went abroad he was armed with three weapons of defence -- a long Pavade, or dagger, with a sharp blade, which he wore in his belt; 'a jolly Popper' or bodkin, which he bore in his pouch; and 'a Sheffield Thwittle,' or knife, carried in his hose. He was also armed with a sword and buckler. He wore a white cotte . . ., and on holydays a blue hood, 'and figured away in red hose made of the same cloth as his wife's gown.'[5]

It was during this century that the men's full overtunic had shortened to the knees, and some men wore their tunics so short that they were "indecently and inadequately dressed, their brevity was the source of continual moralizing and ridicule."[6] His coat was white and floury, while his hood was blue.

> The chemise, which still showed sometimes at neck and wrists, was fairly short (mid-thigh) and slit up front and back. Working men might wear only chemise and drawers, with a belt around the waist and the chemise tails tucked into it

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[4] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 48.

[5] Herbert Norris, Costume and Fashion (London: T. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1927), II, p. 261.

[6] Iris Brooke, Western European Costume Thirteenth to Seventeenth Century and Its Relation to the Theatre (London: George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., 1939), p. 58.

> . . . men . . . wore long tunics (called cote, cotte, or coat) reaching to below the knee, to the calf, ankle or instep. The long garment was especially fashionable during the second half of the century. The cote was a graceful garment with sleeves cut in one with the body, often wide at the top, in the style we call 'dolman.' The skirt was not very full, though allowing a good stride. The cote was belted immediately above the hips, and the upper part bloused a little over the belt. . . . The neckline was rather lower than in the past, a little below the collarbone. It must always have been slit to admit the head . . .[7]

Variations were used in making the hoods, while some were close about the neck and plain, others were very full and jagged at the hem.

Every man wore a leather belt around his hips, from which hung a pouch or purse. The purses were made of "plain black cloth or natural-coloured leather, nearly all, however, are black,"[8] with either "stitched arabesque designs" or "silver and enamel clasps."[9]

Various methods were used by the men to hold up their hip-length stockings, or tights. Long, sewn, fitted stockings, "a contribution of the Northern Barbarians,"[10] "made of bias material,

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[7] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), pp. 132-134.

[8] Dion Clayton Calthrop, English Costume (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906), II, pp. 25-26.

[9] Loc. cit.

[10] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 37.

usually red,"[11] were either "fastened under the surcoat by lacings with points,"[12] or held up by a belt around the waist and were cross-gartered from the knee down."[13]

Many representations of boots were worn. Some boots were worn up to the calf, and usually when "riding, longer boots pulled up above the knee."[14] Being made of pliable leather, they"outlined the foot and leg like hose."[15] Some show no fastenings; some were laced up on the inside or outside, while others buckled at the sides or insteps. Country people usually wore "rudely fashioned cowhide boots."[16]

Yes, the "miller is a bluffer and a bully, but shrewd and penetrating, and full of the cheap chaffing with which the uneducated still bore university men . . . "[17]

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[11] Ibid., p. 38.

[12] Ibid., p. 47.

[13] Ibid., p. 37.

[14] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), p. 162.

[15] Loc. cit.

[16] Loc. cit.

[17] John Strong Perry Tatlock, The Mind and Art of Chaucer (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1950), pp. 99-100.

Glossary

Chemise - undergarment.

Dolman - cote with sleeves but in one with the body.

Pavade - dagger, with a sharp blade.

Popper - bodkin.

Sheffield thwittle - knife.

Tunic - coate, cotte, or coat.

MANCIPLE

A gentil Maunciple was ther of a temple,
Of which achatours myghte take exemple
For to be wise in byynge of vitaille;
For wheither that he payde or took by taille,
Algate he wayted so in his achaat
That he was ay biforn and in good staat.
Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?
Of maistres hadde he mo than thries ten,
There weren of lawe expert and curious,
Of which ther were a duszeyne in that hous
Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond
Of any lord that is in Engelond,
To make hym lyve by his propre good
In honour dettelees (but if he were wood),
Or lyve as scarsly as hym list desire;
And able for to helpen al a shire
In any caas that myghte falle or happe;
And yet this Manciple sette hir aller cappe.[1]

The thinnest of drawn figures was the Manciple; he was merely

> . . . a stalking horse, from behind which Chaucer shoots a playful arrow at his learned masters of the Temple -- capable of managing great estates but not wise enough to defeat the low cunning of their servant.[2]

His bread was buttered more firmly by his efficiency and cleverness; he hoodwinked all of them. By watching his purchases so closely, "he was constantly solvent and even ahead."[3] This tricky

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 25.

[2] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light On Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), p. 257.

[3] R. M. Lumiansky, The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), p. 10.

caterer impressed his victims by speaking Latin when drunk; it was "only a few tags, he didn't seem to be aware of their meaning and was soon at the end of his tether."[4]

> Many of the abbey 'servants' had been young gentlemen of the squire class attached to the monastery, 'wearing its livery, administering its estates, presiding over its manorical courts, acting as stewards, bailiffs, gentlemen farmers.'[5]

There were two definite requirements for clerical costume. The ankle-length outer garment must button or fasten the whole way down. The wearer could choose his choice of color, "except that the three most expensive and fashionable were forbidden -- red, green and striped or parti-coloured."[6]

He wears a surcoat, quite full in the skirt, and it fastens right up to the throat. The long, full sleeves have cuffs or bands covering the wrists.[7] The curious erection on his head is a capuchon, the great "mediaeval head-dress."[8] In shape like a "long sugar-loaf,"[9] he twisted the hood round like a turban, wearing it not as originally planned to be worn. It was used for travelling and in stormy weather.

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[4] Norman G. Brett-James, Introducing Chaucer (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 102.

[5] George Macaulay Trevelyan, Illustrated English Social History (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949), p. 105.

[6] G. G. Coulton, Medieval Panorama (Cambridge: University Press, 1939), p. 306.

[7] Richard Garnett, English Literature (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), I, p. 164.

[8] Marjorie Quennell and Charles Henry Bourne Quennell, A History of Everyday Things in England 1066-1799 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. 60.

[9] Ibid., p. 61.

His hair was rolled or tucked under, close about his head; he was clean shaven.

His "shoes are slightly pointed and are buttoned round the ankle."[10] A pouch hangs from his girdle; a knife was usually trust in it.

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Glossary

Capuchon - head-dress.

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[10] Ibid., p. 60.

REEVE

The Reve was a sclendre colerik man.
His berd was shave as ny as ever he kan;
His heer was by his erys ful round yshorn;
His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.
Ful longe were his legges and ful lene,
Ylyk a staf, ther was no calf ysene.
Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne;
Ther was noon auditour koude on him wynne.
Wel wiste he by the droghte and by the reyn
The yeldynge of his seed and of his greyn.
. . . . . .
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
This Reve sat upon a ful good stot,
That was al pomely grey and highte Scot.
A long surcote of pers upon he hade,
And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this Reve of which I telle,
Biside a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.
Tukked he was as is a frere aboute,
And evere he rood the hyndreste of oure route.[1]

Most people were as afraid of the Reeve as the dreaded disease, Black Death. "Competent, crafty, suspicious and tight in physique and personality,"[2] the elderly Reeve knew all the tricks of farming, besides being a very fine carpenter. Being a steward in complete control of a large landed estate "since his lord was twenty years of age,"[3] he was "supremely skilled in dealing with officials above him and laborers below."[4] He had a knack of knowing how to please his

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), pp. 25-26.

[2] John Strong Perry Tatlock, The Mind and Art of Chaucer (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1950), p. 99.

[3] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light on Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), pp. 86-87.

[4] Loc. cit.

master cunningly, for which he was thanked, praised, and generously rewarded. With that sly look in his eye "curiously belied by the flash that tells of a temper badly controlled, you feel that he is as dangerous as he is shifty, and you know not whether to pity most the young lord he fleeces, or the fellow-knaves he terrorizes."[5]

All bones and wrinkles, this slender, choleric, or bilious man had long, lean legs, just like a stick, completely lacking calves. "A choleric man (like the Reeve) was thought to be hot and dry."[6] He shaved his beard as close as he could. His ugly hair cut was "docked like a priest,"[7] "having a straight bang across the forehead, . . . shaved half way up the back, close cut in front of the ears, lying cap-like on top of the head."[8]

"Pers, a deep blue"[9] was the color of his long surcoat, with the tails tucked under his belt. He wore an old rusty sword by his

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[5] Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., The Prologue From Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1899), p. lviii.

[6] Nevill Coghill, Chaucer The Canterbury Tales (London and Beccles: William Clowes and Sons, Ltd., 1951), p. 516.

[7] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light on Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), pp. 86-87.

[8] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), p. 157.

[9] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1938), p. 109.

side. He "hitched his coat up like a friar,"[10] and he was the last rider of all in the cavalcade.

> The surcoat 'in its simplest form . . . was a sleeveless tunic with armholes wide enough to allow the free passage of loose-topped cote-sleeves. It was belted or unbelted at will, and its length varied from above knees to the ankle. It was slit up the back and sometimes up the front, for horsemen; for greater convenience, the two front corners might be tucked into the belt. Often it was made of rich material, fine woolen, samite, or other heavy silk, or even cloth of gold. Its neckline was like that of the cote, but the slit of the surcote was often richly trimmed and fashioned with an elaborate brooch. Another very usual fashion was to leave the slit open and let the two corners fall back like revers, sometimes even rounding them out to make narrow lappets. Occasionally also a small round collar finished the neck, or a hood was attached to it.'[11]

Samite, also samit, was a "rich silk interwoven with gold."[12]

-o-

Glossary

Pers - a deep blue color.

Surcoat - a sleeveless tunic.

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[10] Norman G. Brett-James, Introducing Chaucer (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 92.

[11] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1936), p. 134.

[12] Mary G. Houston, Medieval Costume in England and France (4, 5 & 6 Soho Square London W.: Adam & Charles Black, 1939), p. 224.

SUMMONER

A Somonour was ther with us in that place,
That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynnes face,
For saucefleem he was, with eyen narwe.
As hoot he was and lecherous as a sparwe,
With scalled browes blake and piled berd.
Of his visage children were aferd.
Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymstoon,
Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon;
Ne oynement that wolde chense and byte,
That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white,
Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood;
Thanne wolde he speke and crie as he were wood.
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
Thanne wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A fewe termes hadde he, two or thre,
That he had lerned out of som decree --
No wonder is, he herde it all the day;
. . . . . .
Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede,
For curs wol slee right as assoillyng savith,
And also war hym of a Significavit.
In daunger hadde he at his owene gise
The yonge girles of the diocise,
And knew hir conseil, and was al hir reed
A gerland hadde he set upon his heed
As greet as it were for an ale-stake.
A bokeleer hadde he maad hym of a cake.[1]

Terrified at his visage, frightened by his face, even shrinking from his path -- hideous to the eye as to the mind -- which was his greatest condemnation, these were the children's reactions when they saw him. Not only were the children scared, he even frightened simpletons and quiet men. Untroubled by speculation, Chaucer recorded what he saw, and heard; so vivid was his Summoner's

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), p. 26.

description it seems as though it were a present day interview. This court officer was supposed to correct vices, yet this vilest of mankind made a fortune by preying on the vices. He corresponds "to the blackmailer of today; he lives on the scandalous secrets he has discovered, except that the blackmailer carries on his private enterprises under the ban of the law, while the Summoner was a Church official."[2] "His deep voice silences in a moment all other talk."[3]

This firey-red, coarse, shiny baby or cherubim-faced fellow had the "scurvy eczema,"[4] or was"leprous."[5] In medieval art, the cherubins were "generally depicted with flame-coloured faces."[6] He had "carbuncles,"[7] too, even with his "salt-phlegmed and pimply"[8] face. His black scabby eyebrows above the slits for his eyes, and his ragged, scraggly "pilled -- that is to say scanty"[9]

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[2] George Macaulay Trevelyan, England in the Age of Wycliffe (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1904), pp. 115-116.

[3] Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., The Prologue From Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1899), p. lviii.

[4] G. G. Coulton, Chaucer and His England (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950), p. 149.

[5] R. M. Lumiansky, The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), p. 11.

[6] Nevill Coghill, Chaucer The Canterbury Tales (London and Beccles: William Clowes and Sons, Ltd., 1951), p. 517.

[7] Ibid., p. 42.

[8] John S. P. Tatlock and Percy Mackaye, The Complete Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), p. 11.

[9] Reginald Reynolds, Beards (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1949), p. 162.

beard, made "a strange picture,"[10] especially since he was as hot and lecherous as a sparrow.

It seemed as though no ointment of any kind that would clean and burn could help his white blotches or the knobs on his chaps.

> The desired complexion of the period was pale and delicate, and powders of harmful pigment were employed to secure it, even to painting the face with white lead. There were epilatory pastes, pomades for the skin and lips and a powdered dentifrice for whitening the teeth.[11]

"During the Middle Ages cosmetics and drugs of all sorts were used in large quantities."[12]

Conspicuous garments were worn by obnoxious people, warning others to avoid physical or moral contamination. A man wearing a grey coat and a scarlet hat was a leper.[13] This officer's knee-length, loose-fitting tunic had large, elbow length cape sleeves.[14] His "long and often buttoned from elbow to wrist"[15] under-tunic sleeves were displayed.

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[10] Loc. cit.

[11] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 48.

[12] Katherine Morris Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, Accessories of Dress (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1940), p. 141.

[13] William Stearns Davis, Life on a Mediaeval Barony (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1923), p. 98.

[14] George Macaulay Trevelyan, Illustrated English Social History (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949), Picture No. 5.

[15] Fairfax Proudfit Walkup, Dressing the Part (New York F. S. Crofts & Co., 1930), p. 109.

He had placed a flower garland, a bouquet on his head, large enough to decorate an alehouse signpost, or an alestake. "Band of real or artificial flowers encircled the heads of the dandies, the artificial flowers made in enamels or gold."[16] His hair was brushed back of his ears.

> Wreaths were made of feathers also, especially peacock tails. . . . Lovers still exchanged flower-wreaths, May day being an especial occasion for giving and wearing such favors.[17]

"Solid color,"[18] long hose, or chausses, were worn and held up like tights. To prevent sagging or wrinkling, a ribbon or garter was tied below the knee of each leg. A coarse common shoe with wooden sole was a savate; "in time the word came to mean an old shoe or a clumsy fellow."[19]

His greediness for foodstuffs is best advertised by this fact, he carried a round, big buckler "made out of a cake."[20]

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[16] Dion Clayton Calthrop, English Costume (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906), II, p. 48.

[17] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1936), p. 131.

[18] Walkup, loc. cit.

[19] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Footwear (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 69.

[20] Norman C. Brett-James, Introducing Chaucer (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 83.

Glossary

Carbuncle - a painful inflammatory tumor, like a boil, but having no central core.

Chausses - long hose.

Cherubim - cherub (angel).

Eczema - an inflammatory itching disease of the skin.

Garland - wreath of flowers.

Phlegmed - clammy humour of body, inflammation, heat, morbid clammy humour (as the result of heat); in old physiology, regarded as one of the four bodily 'humours,' described as cold and moist, and supposed when predominant to cause constitutional indolence or apathy.

Savate - coarse common shoe with wooden sole.

PARDONER

With hym ther rood a gentil Pardoner
Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer,
That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.
Ful loude he soong "Com hider, love, to me!"
This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun;
Was nevere trompe of half so greet a soun.
This Pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,
But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex;
By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde,
And therwith he his shuldres overspradde;
But thynne it law, by colpons oon and oon.
But hood, for jolitee, wered he noon,
For it was trussed up in his walet.
Hym thoughte he rood al of the newe jet;
Dischevelee, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare.
A vernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe.
His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe,
Bretful of pardoun, comen from Rome al noot.
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.
No berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have;
As smothe it was as it were late shave.
I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare.
. . . . . .
And thus, with feyned flaterye and japes,
He made the person and the peple his apes.
But trewely to tellen atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste.
Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
But alderbest he song an offertorie;
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
He moste preche and wel affile his tonge
To wynne silver, as he ful wel koude;
Therefore he song the murierly and loude.[1]

Rascals and redeemed. He was among the "parasites that crawled on the skirts of the Church and plied under her broad

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[1] F. N. Robinson, The Poetical Works of Chaucer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), pp. 26-27.

mantle their dubious trade in sacred things."[2] However, "even the preachings of itinerating cheats like the Friar and the Pardoner must have helped to preserve the common man's mind from utter stagnation."[3] His common humanity, with flattering deceit, bamboozled and made monkeys of the parson and people, "revealing with gusto and eloquence all the tricks of his trade and all the greed, humbug, and rascality of his nature."[4] Profound weakness and insecurity are shown by his rascality. Skilful acting, manifold rascality appears, an eloquent silver-tongued preacher who won and filled his pockets with silver. Sweetened philosophy. Betrayed holiness. Hardened bluff.

> The Pardoner's vanities are all repulsive -- he wears no hood 'for jolitee,' and his hair falls in hanks; his own picture of himself preaching, stretching his neck and bobbing his head like a dove on a barn, is grotesque; his pardons come all hot from Rome, and these with his fake relics suggest the worst abuses of religion . . . his own fairly long discourse is all defense.[5]

A "Pardoner was a Papal agent who travelled through England selling indulgences and relics on behalf of his master."[6]

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[2] G. G. Coulton, Chaucer and His England (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950), p. 148.

[3] Richard Garnett, English Literature (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), I, p. 159.

[4] Percy Van Dyke Shelly, The Living Chaucer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940), p. 214.

[5] Howard Rollin Patch, On Rereading Chaucer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939), pp. 164-165.

[6] George Macaulay Trevelyan, England in the Age of Wycliffe (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1904), pp. 135-136.

He had long waxy-yellow hair, "blond hair being the desired color."[7] "It was often dyed with saffron."[8] Much admiration was given to yellow hair, whether natural or false. "He wore what hair he had gathered into small bunches on top."[9] Hanging smooth, like a hank of flax, his rat tails spread over his shoulders in thin strands.

> Gentlemen either bleached their hair or wore wigs of blond or yellow silk . . . Another fashion . . . was a fluffy, frizzed shoulder-length bob which looked as if the hair had been braided tightly into tiny plaits at night and then combed out in the morning. The long coiffure was called a wig whether natural or false.[10]

His eyes were starting out of his head like a hare's. His face was as smooth as if lately shaven; he never did have a beard. He had his hood tied up in his wallet. He rode with dishevelled hair, bareheaded, except for his little cap. A vernicle, a religious talisman, was sewn on his cap.

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[7] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 39.

[8] Elizabeth Sage, A Study of Costume (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 74.

[9] R. M. Lumiansky, The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), p. 12.

[10] R. Turner Wilcox, The Mode in Hats and Headdress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 39.

> The vernicle is the portrait of Christ miraculously imprinted upon a napkin, with which St. Veronica wiped the Saviour's face on the road to Calvary. The relic is preserved at Rome, and the Pardoner, as pilgrims today, brought back a small copy of it.[11]

He was a striking person, indeed, with "his new Italian fashions."[12] Form-fitting garments were the latest in style, the skirts (often abbreviated to the knee) had no superfluous fullness. Skilful tailoring was demanded for both body and leg covering. It was either worn directly over the washable chemise or a cote. This close-fitting garment, named cote-hardie, "had a close-fitting, long waisted body to which was attached a skirt, usually represented as without pleats or gathers,"[13] either gored at the sides or cut partially circular, yet full enough to allow free movement. A belt covered the waist joint.

To the well-dressed man hose became very important. "Probably most stockings were cut from strong but elastic cloth and fitted to the leg with seams."[14] They were long separate stockings; they were not joined in the crotch, not tights. When the shape of the leg

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[11] Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., The Prologue From Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1899), p. 29.

[12] John Matthews Manly, Some New Light on Chaucer (New York: H. Holt and Company, (c1926)), p. 130.

[13] Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1938), p. 135.

[14] Loc. cit.

needed improving, "cloth hose were lined and possible padded."[15] Some were knitted, although they were mostly always of wool, very rarely of silk. A matter of choice was in the color chosen, gray blue, slate, or red were the most popular colors. "As the stockings grew longer, the under-drawers grew shorter and scanter, . . . long hose were usually attached by straps to the belt or drawstring of the drawers."[16]

Well dressed men wore simple shoes and equally plain slippers, usually represented as black. Black soft, close-fitting leather boots were also worn in outdoor pursuits.

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Glossary

Saffron - the dried orange-colored stigmas of a species of crocus. They are used for flavoring and coloring. The color of saffron is deep orange-yellow.

Talisman - a charm, amulet; as, a stone, ring or the like with mystic figures or characters engraved on it.

Vernicle - a religious talisman.

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[15] Loc. cit.

[16] Ibid., p. 136.

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